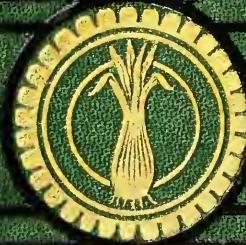


GEMS OF HOME SCENERY



ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT



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English Lake Scenery

Gems of Home Scenery

VIEWS IN THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT

ORIGINAL DRAWINGS BY T. L. ROWBOTHAM

MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLORS

WITH
DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

COMPILED BY
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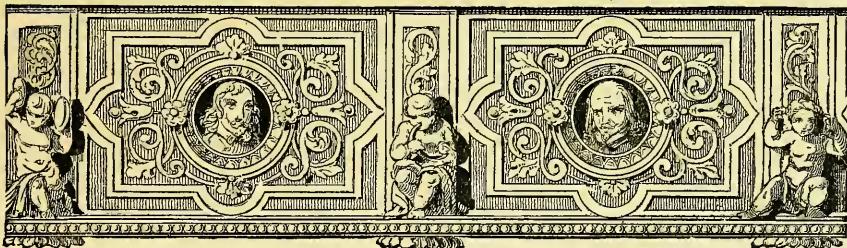
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DERWENTWATER.

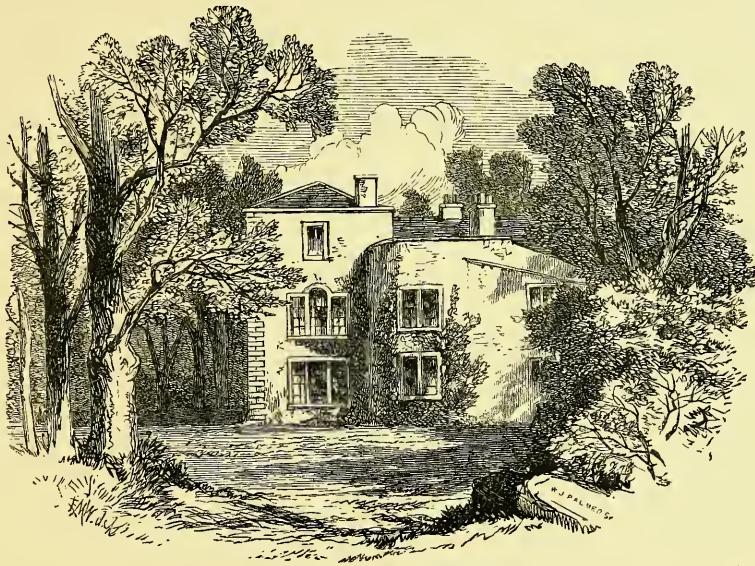


THE lakes in the chain of which Windermere is the largest member, are all dependent on a southward flow of streams from the heights of Borrowdale and Langdale. But Derwentwater belongs to a different series. It is one of a short system, which includes Bassenthwaite, and, a little further west, Crummock and Buttermere, and which, sending its waters northward at first, turns westward at Cockermouth, where the Cocker flows into the Derwent, and ends at length where the whole "water-shed" reaches the sea at Workington. Derwentwater is small as compared with Windermere and Ullswater, but larger than Buttermere and Rydal, being fully three miles in length from Keswick to Lodore, and a mile in width at Barrow Bay, beneath Castlerigg. Beyond Keswick, at the northern extremity, rises Skiddaw, which is upwards of three thousand feet in height, and is in many respects the most remarkable of the mountains in the Lake Country, although in actual

altitude it must yield to Helvellyn and Scafell. The summit commands a view three hundred miles in circumference—that is, if the weather be favourable; but rain and mist prevail all over its slopes during a great part of the year. The view of Derwentwater, lying as it does to the south of Skiddaw, is perhaps the most attractive feature in the whole panorama; the lake is seen, with its islands, as in a map, not from the top of the mountain, whence it is concealed by a shoulder, but from a slope about half-way up. Skiddaw is believed by geologists to have once been considerably higher than it is now. The crumbling stone, a slaty schist, of which it is composed, is peculiarly liable to the action of the atmosphere.

At Keswick, at the north-eastern end of Derwentwater, Southey, the poet-laureate, lived for thirty years. His life was remarkable more for its unwearied labour than for any peculiar power of genius. The verdict of years upon his poetry has not been favourable. Merely judged in comparison with that of Coleridge or Wordsworth, it may be said to have utterly disappeared, faded by their superior light. But Southey must always live in the literature of our country. He was constantly engaged in composition. His pen was unwearied. His information was equal to his industry, and to him must be attributed much of the direction which literary culture has taken in our own generation. Little either of his poetry or of his prose is now remembered or quoted; and probably no one would be more surprised than Southey and his contemporaries to find that thirty years after his death the nursery had appropriated his best-known works, both in verse and prose. It is there we find—still popular—his story

of the “Three Bears,” and his “Cataract of Lodore.” Southeby called his house at Keswick his “Ant-hill,” from the circumstance that his household was composed of three sisters—his wife, Mrs. Lovell, and Mrs. Coleridge; and as each of these ladies had children, each child had two separate sets of aunts, and each of the



GRETA HALL, THE DWELLING OF ROBERT SOUTHEY.

ladies was an aunt twice over as well as a mother. De Quincey says of Southey:—

“Southey, like Gibbon, was a miscellaneous scholar; he, like Gibbon, of vast historical research; he, like Gibbon, signally industrious and patient, and elaborate in collecting the materials for his historical works. Like Gibbon, he had dedicated a life to literature; like Gibbon, he had gathered to the shores of a beautiful lake, remote from great capitals, a large, or at

least sufficient library (in each case, I believe, the library ranged, as to numerical amount, between seven and ten thousand); and, like Gibbon, he was the most accomplished littérateur amongst the erudite scholars of his time, and the most of an erudite scholar amongst the accomplished littérateurs. After all these points of agreement known, it remains as a pure advantage on the side of Southey—a mere *lucro ponatur*—that he was a poet, brilliant in his descriptive powers, and fascinating in his narration. It is remarkable, amongst the series of parallelisms which have been or might be pursued between two men, that both had the honour of retreating by deliberate choice from a Parliamentary life: Gibbon, after some silent and inert experience of that warfare; Southey, with a prudent foresight of the ruin to his health and literary usefulness, won vicariously from the experience of others."

He adds in a note:—"It illustrated the national sense of Southey's comprehensive talents, and of his political integrity, that Lord Radnor (the same who, under the courtesy title of Lord Folkestone, had distinguished himself for very democratic politics in the House of Commons, and had even courted the technical designation of *radical*) was the man who offered to bring in Southey for a borough dependent on *his* influence. Sir Robert Peel, under the same sense of Southey's merits, had offered him a baronetcy. Both honours were declined on the same prudential considerations, and with the same perfect disregard of all temptations from personal vanity."

Southey died in 1842, and was buried at Crossthwaite, where a fine monument by Lough, which cost £1100, was raised to his memory. His friend Wordsworth, who succeeded him as poet-laureate, wrote the epitaph, which reads as follows:—

“ Ye vales and hills whose beauty hither drew
The poet’s steps, and fixed him here, on you
His eyes have closed ! And ye, loved books, no more
Shall Southey feed upon your precious lore,
To works that ne’er shall forfeit their renown,
Adding immortal labours of his own—
Whether he traced historic truth, with zeal
For the State’s guidance, or the Church’s weal,
Or Fancy, disciplined by studious art,
Informed his pen, or wisdom of the heart,
Or judgments sanctioned in the Patriot’s mind
By reverence for the rights of all mankind.
Wide were his aims, yet in no human breast
Could private feelings meet for holier rest.
His joys, his griefs, have vanished like a cloud
From Skiddaw’s top ; but he to heaven was vowed
Through his industrious life, and Christian faith
Calmed in his soul the fear of change and death.”

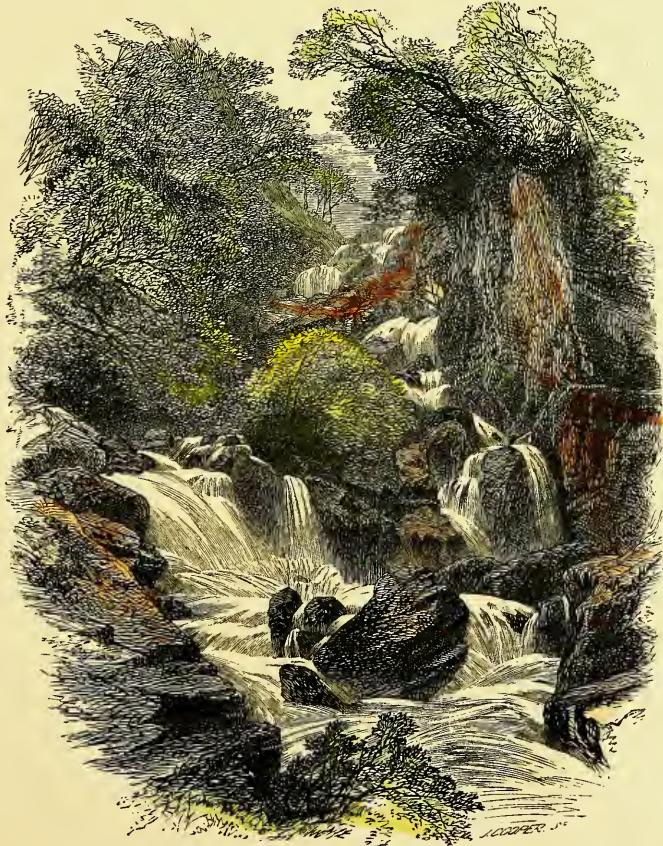
De Quincey gives some interesting particulars of Southey’s personal appearance, every-day life, and habits. He describes him as having black hair, but a fair complexion. His eyes were hazel and large, his nose aquiline, his expression noble, and even proud. He had a remarkable habit of “looking up into the air as if looking at abstractions ; the expression of his face was that of a very aspiring man.” De Quincey does not attempt to reconcile this statement with that which he makes in the note we quoted above as to his refusal of Parliamentary and other honours. He never rose before eight, though he went to bed duly at half-past ten ; but he often said he found less than nine hours’ sleep insufficient.

“ From breakfast to a latish dinner was his main period of

literary toil. After dinner, according to the accident of having or not having visitors in the house, he sat over his wine, or he retired to his library again, from which, about eight, he was summoned to tea. But, generally speaking, he closed his *literary* toils at dinner ; the whole of the hours after that meal being dedicated to his correspondence. This, it may be supposed, was unusually large, to occupy so much of his time, since his letters rarely extended to any length. At that period, the post, by way of Penrith, reached Keswick about six or seven in the evening. And so pointedly regular was Southey in all his habits, that, short as the time was, all letters were answered on the same evening which brought them. At tea, he read the London papers. It was perfectly astonishing to find how much he got through of elaborate business by his unvarying system of arrangement in the distribution of his time. We often hear it said, in accounts of pattern ladies and gentlemen, that they found time for everything ; that business never interrupted pleasure ; that labours of duty or charity never stood in the way of courtesy or personal enjoyment. This is easy to say—easy to put down as one feature of an imaginary portrait : but I must say, that, in actual life, I have seen few such cases. Southey, however, *did* find time for everything. It moved the sneers of some people, that even his poetry was composed according to a predetermined rule ; that so many lines should be produced, by contract, as it were, before breakfast ; so many at such another definite interval. Meantime, the *prose of Southey was that by which he lived*. The *Quarterly Review* it was by which, as he expressed it laughingly to myself in 1810, he “*made the pot boil*.” One single paper, for instance—viz., a review of Lord Nelson’s life,

which subsequently was expanded into his own popular little work on that subject—brought him the splendid *honorarium* of £150."

If Southey's prose was what he lived by, it is also what his fame lives by still. *Thalaba* is forgotten, but the *Life of Nelson* will live long in our literature. *Lodore* and the *Three Bears* belong to the nursery, as we have already remarked; though unquestionably his description of the cataract is worthy of a poet.



CATARACT OF LODORE.

Another poet's name is also connected with Derwentwater. Rogers has made it the scene of an affecting episode in his *Pleasures of Memory*. The lines which tell of Florio's explorations and of the death of the lovely Julia are now seldom read ; but the descriptive portions of the passage, which occurs in the Second Part, are worth reading, and run as follows :—

“ Once, and domestic annals tell the time
(Preserved in Cumbria's rude romantic clime),
When Nature smiled, and o'er the landscape threw
Her richest fragrance and her brightest hue,
A blithe and blooming forester explored
Those loftier scenes Salvator's soul adored—
The rocky pass half hung with shaggy wood,
And the cleft oak hung boldly o'er the flood,
Nor shunned the path, unknown to human tread,
That downward to the night of caverns led—
Some antient cataract's deserted bed.

High on exulting wing the heath-cock rose,
And blew his shrill blast o'er perennial snows,
Ere the wrapt youth, recoiling from the roar,
Gazed on the tumbling tide of dread Lodoar,
And, thro' the rifted cliffs that scaled the sky,
Derwent's clear mirror charmed his dazzled eye :
Each osier isle, inverted on the wave,
Thro' morn's grey mist its melting colours gave ;
And o'er the eygnet's haunt the mantling grove
Its emerald arch with wild luxuriance wove.

Light as the breeze that brushed the orient dew,
From rock to rock the young adventurer flew ;
And day's last sunshine slept along the shore,
When, lo ! a path the smile of welcome wore.
Embowering shrubs with verdure veiled the sky,
And on the musk-rose shed a deeper dye,

Save when a bright and momentary gleam
Glanced from the white foam of some sheltered stream.

When evening tinged the lake's ethereal blue,
And her deep shades irregularly threw,
Their shifting sail dropt gently from the cove,
Down by St. Herbert's consecrated grove ;
Whence erst the chanted hymn, the tapered rite,
Amused the fisher's solitary night.
And still the mitred window, richly wreathed,
A sacred calm thro' the brown foliage breathed.

The wild deer, starting thro' the silent glade,
With fearful gaze their various course surveyed.
High hung in air the hoary goat reclined,
His streaming beard the sport of every wind ;
And, while the coot her jet-wing loved to lave,
Rocked on the bosom of the sleepless wave,
The eagle rushed from Skiddaw's purple crest,
A cloud still brooding o'er her giant nest."

The islands of Derwentwater, to one of which—St. Herbert's—Rogers makes especial allusion in the foregoing lines, are numerous and beautiful. St. Herbert's deserves the first notice, on account of the supposed antiquity of the remains upon it. St. Herbert was a recluse, who is mentioned by the Venerable Bede. He died on the islet in 687; but Bede's account of his life and death is very brief, and so charmingly quaint that we must quote it:—

"There was a certain priest, venerable for the probity of his life and manners, called Herebert, who had long been united with the man of God, Cuthbert, in the bonds of spiritual friendship. Hearing that Bishop Cuthbert was come to the city of Lugubalia, he repaired thither to him, according to custom, being desirous to

be still more and more inflamed in heavenly desires through his wholesome admonitions. Whilst they alternately entertained one another with the delights of the celestial life, the bishop, among other things, said, ‘Brother Herebert, remember at this time to ask me all the questions you wish to have resolved, and say all you design ; for we shall see one another no more in this world. For I am sure that the time of my dissolution is at hand, and I shall speedily put off this tabernacle of the flesh.’ Hearing these words, he fell down at his feet, and shedding tears, with a sigh, said—‘I beseech you, by our Lord, not to forsake me ; but that you remember your most faithful companion, and entreat the Supreme Goodness that, as we served Him together upon earth, we may depart together to see His bliss in heaven. For you know that I have always endeavoured to live according to your directions, and whatsoever faults I have committed, either through ignorance or frailty, I have instantly submitted to correction according to your will.’ The bishop applied himself to prayer ; and having presently had intimation in the spirit that he had obtained what he asked of the Lord, he said, “Rise, brother, and do not weep, but rejoice, because the Heavenly Goodness has granted what we desired.”

“The event proved the truth of this promise and prophecy, for, after their parting at that time, they no more saw one another in the flesh ; but their souls quitted their bodies on the very same day—that is, on the 20th of March. They were immediately again united in spirit, and translated to the heavenly kingdom by the ministry of angels. But Herbert was first prepared by a tedious sickness through the dispensation of the Divine Goodness, as may be believed, to the end that if he was anything inferior in merit to

the blessed Cuthbert, the same might be made up by the chastening pain of a long sickness, that being thus made equal in grace to his intercessor, as he departed out of the body at the very same time with him, so he might be received into the same seat of eternal bliss."

His most enthusiastic admirer can hardly say that Wordsworth has improved on this charming old passage in his metrical version, composed "For the spot where the Hermitage stood on St. Herbert's Island":—

"If thou in the dear love of some one Friend
Hast been so happy that thou know'st what thoughts
Will sometimes in the happiness of love
Make the heart sink, then wilt thou reverence
This quiet spot; and, Stranger! not unmoved
Wilt thou behold this shapeless heap of stones,
The desolate ruins of St. Herbert's Cell.
Here stood his threshold; here was spread the roof
That sheltered him, a self-secluded Man,
After long exercise in social cares
And offices humane, intent to adore
The Deity, with undistracted mind,
And meditate on everlasting things,
In utter solitude.—But he had left
A Fellow-labourer, whom the good Man loved
As his own soul. And, when with eye upraised
To heaven he knelt before the crucifix,
While o'er the lake the cataract of Lodore
Pealed to his orisons, and when he paced
Along the beach of this small isle and thought
Of his Companion, he would pray that both
(Now that their earthly duties were fulfilled)
Might die in the same moment. Nor in vain

So prayed he :—as our chronicles report,
Though here the Hermit numbered his last day
Far from St. Cuthbert his beloved Friend,
Those holy men both died in the same hour.”

The remains on St. Herbert's Island are neither extensive nor important, and the antiquarian will hardly pronounce them as old as the seventh century. So shapeless, however, and indefinite are they, that any age may be assigned without much fear of contradiction. On Derwent Island there was also a cell, a dependency of the Abbey of Fountains. More interest perhaps has been excited by the celebrated *Floating Island*, of which Brayley gives the following account :—

“The floating Island of Keswick has been a theme of occasional controversy, and its existence has not unfrequently been denied ; though, in our opinion, there is sufficient proof of its reality, notwithstanding the mantle of invisibility in which it is most frequently enwrapped. The place where its appearance occurs (for it is but seldom visible) is on the southern side of the lake, and nearly opposite to the fall of Lowdore. It occasionally appears for a few days, and then becomes invisible for many weeks, and sometimes even for months and years, at which time it is covered with water to the depth of five or six feet. In Clark's Survey of the Lakes, it is described as about twenty yards in diameter, nearly circular, and sloping gradually from the centre to the circumference, whence, ‘as far as the eye can distinguish, the sloping is more sudden. The island is never visible unless the water in the lake be *high*, and then it scarcely appears more than a foot above the surface.’

"This account varies in some particulars from the description given by Mr. Housman, who sought for this island in the autumn of 1798. He observes, 'that there was then no appearance of any island ; but his conductor positively asserted that it had appeared for six weeks above the water the summer before. That it was long and narrow, being at one time upwards of one hundred yards in length, having *long grass* upon it, and that it gradually sunk down again.' It was then about five feet under water, with a deep bottom on each side.

"The mode in which this phenomenon is accounted for by Mr. Clark is ingenious ; but whether supported by sufficient observation, we are unable to state. He supposes that the torrent which in wet seasons pours down a fissure called *Cat-gill*, from the adjacent heights, and seems totally lost, forces its way between the loose stones, and endeavours to mingle with the waters of the lake ; but finding its course impeded by the superincumbent turf, and strong-matted roots of the grass which covers it, raises the turf into a convex form, and, during the continuance of the torrent, gives it the appearance of an island. This hypothesis he endeavours to strengthen by observing, that he has *stood* upon the island, and caught fish ; and once pierced the surface with his fishing-rod, which the grass roots embraced so closely that no water could escape ; 'but, upon withdrawing it, the water spouted to the height of two feet.'"

More recent investigators confirm this account on the whole. But greater mystery attaches to another phenomenon of Derwentwater, with respect to which *Murray* gives very ambiguous information :—

"Another of the peculiarities of this lake is what is popularly called the 'bottom wind.' The water is said to be sometimes agitated by waves when the atmosphere is perfectly still, a phenomenon supposed to be caused by an evolution of air from beneath. But if air is disengaged, it would, according to Dr. Davy, be seen rising in bubbles, not producing waves. If the fact of there being waves on the lake in a calm state of the atmosphere should be proved, there must, he says, be some other cause for their production than this imaginary 'bottom wind.'

Of all the islands which stud the bosom of Derwentwater, the largest amount of popular interest centres upon that which is locally known as "Lord's Island." This is the original seat of the family of Derwentwater, which became extinct in the male line in the reign of Henry V., when their heiress, Margaret de Derwentwater, married one of the Radcliffes of Dilston in Northumberland, who built a small house on the island, and dismantled a larger one which is stated to have stood upon Castlerigg. The Lord's Island was only an occasional residence, yet it is chiefly remembered in connection with their name, because when, in 1688, King James II. made Sir Francis Radcliffe of Dalston an Earl, he chose the title of Derwentwater, which in the time of his grandson was to become so sadly famous. All the land on the north-eastern side of the lake was his, as well as the paternal estates in Northumberland. His family fell by the influence of a fatal marriage. At first it seemed to bring nothing but honour. This was the union of the young Francis Radcliffe with Mary Tudor, one of the numerous children of Charles II. It brought the peerage to the Radcliffes, but also brought them an ill-omened

connection with the doomed house of Stuart. The first Earl of Derwentwater died in 1696, and his son succeeded him, and died in 1705, leaving, by his half-royal wife, three sons and one daughter. His successor was James—last Earl—whose melancholy fate has so often been narrated. He married Anne Maria, the daughter of Sir John Webb. She was an ardent partisan of the Stuarts, and urged her husband into the unfortunate rebellion. We shall not here follow the story of the abortive rising of 1715 ; it is well known to all readers of English history. It is enough for us to note that in October Lord Derwentwater openly joined Mr. Forster, by whom, as General for the Pretender, the standard of rebellion was to be raised in the North. On the 12th of November, he, with the other leaders, being shut up and surrounded by the king's forces in Preston, was at first delivered up as a hostage, and, when the whole rebel army had surrendered, was sent with others to take their trial in London. Scott thus describes their arrival in the capital :—

“ The prisoners, most of them men of birth and education, were, on approaching the capital, all pinioned with cords like the vilest criminals. This ceremony they underwent at Barnet. At Highgate they were met by a large detachment of horse grenadiers and foot guards, preceded by a body of citizens decently dressed, who shouted, to give example to the mob. Halters were put upon the horses ridden by the prisoners, and each man's horse was led by a private soldier. Forster, a man of high family, and still Member of Parliament for Northumberland, was exposed in the same manner as the rest. A large mob of the patrons of the mug-houses attended upon the occasion, beating upon warming-pans (in

allusion to the vulgar account of the birth of the Chevalier de St. George), and the prisoners, with all sorts of scurrilous abuse and insult, were led through the streets of the city in this species of unworthy triumph, and deposited in the jails of Newgate, the Marshalsea, and other prisons in the metropolis.

"In consequence of this sudden increase of tenants, a most extraordinary change took place in the discipline of these melancholy abodes. When the High Church party in London began to recover from the astonishment with which they had witnessed the suppression of the insurrection, they could not look back with much satisfaction on their own passive behaviour during the contest, if it could be called one, and now endeavoured to make up for it by liberally supplying the prisoners, whom they regarded as martyrs in their cause, with money and provisions, in which wine was not forgotten. The fair sex are always disposed to be compassionate, and certainly were not least so in this case, where the objects of pity were many of them gallant young cavaliers, sufferers in a cause which they had been taught to consider as sacred. The consequence was, that the prisons overflowed with wine and good cheer, and the younger and more thoughtless part of the inmates turned to revelling and drowning in liquor all more serious thoughts of their situation; so that even Lord Derwentwater himself said of his followers, that they were fitter inhabitants for Bridewell than a State prison. Money, it is said, circulated so plentifully among them, that when it was difficult to obtain silver for a guinea in the streets, nothing was so easy as to find change, whether of gold or silver, in the jail."

This was on the 9th December, and when Parliament met a

month later, the Earl of Derwentwater was impeached of high treason on the very first day of the session. In ten days all was ready, and, accompanied by six other peers, all implicated in the rebellion, he was brought before the House of Lords, where they were placed kneeling at the bar. The Chancellor, desiring them to rise, called upon them to plead. They did not deny their guilt, and threw themselves on the clemency of the King, with one exception, that of the Scottish Earl of Winton, who was formally tried and condemned, but eventually was so fortunate as to escape from the Tower, and make his way in safety to the Continent. Of the others, Lord Nairn was saved by the intercession of one of the Ministers, with whom he had been at school. Lord Stanhope thus details the hopes and fears of the rest :—

“The Duchesses of Cleveland and Bolton, and other ladies of the first rank, accompanied the young Countess of Derwentwater to an audience of the King, and joined her in imploring his Majesty’s clemency. . . . Attempts were also made elsewhere upon feelings more ignoble than those of compassion ; and the First Lord of the Treasury declared in the House of Commons that £60,000 had been offered him if he would obtain the pardon of only one, Lord Derwentwater. Several of the staunchest Whigs in the House of Commons—amongst others Sir Richard Steele, with his characteristic good nature—were inclined to mercy. But Walpole took the lead in urging measures of severity, and declared that he was ‘moved with indignation to see that there should be such unworthy members of this great body, who can, without blushing, open their mouths in favour of rebels and parricides.’ When we consider how very greatly and

undoubtedly Walpole was distinguished by personal lenity and forbearance, during his long administration, his vehemence on this occasion may surely be alleged as no small proof of the real necessity for making some rigorous examples. He moved the adjournment of the House till the 1st of March, it being understood that the condemned peers would be executed in the interval ; but he prevailed only by a majority of seven, the numbers being 162 and 155.

“In the House of Lords the friends of the unfortunate noblemen made a still more effectual stand. A debate having arisen on the presentation of their petition, one member of the Cabinet, the Earl of Nottingham, mindful of his former Tory principles and friendships, suddenly declared in their favour. His unexpected defection threw confusion and discord into the Ministerial ranks, the resistance of the Government was overruled, and an address to the King for a reprieve to such of the condemned Lords as should deserve his mercy was carried by a majority of five.

“Astonished and alarmed at this result, the Ministers met in Council the same evening. They drew up the King’s answer to the address, merely stating, ‘that on this and all other occasions he would do what he thought most consistent with the dignity of his crown, and the safety of his people.’”

Two of the condemned Lords, however, were respited ; but, to put an end to any further pleading, the execution of the remaining three was ordered for the following morning. Lord Stanhope thus continues :—

“In the night that intervened, one of the condemned peers, Lord Nithisdale, had the good fortune to make his escape from the

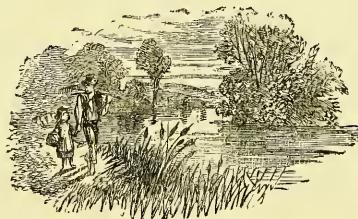
Tower in disguise, his mother, who came to visit him, having brought him a woman's dress. The King, when informed of this event, good-naturedly observed, that it was the best thing that a man in his situation could do. Thus the number of noble victims was finally reduced to two, and early next morning, the 24th of February, Lords Derwentwater and Kenmure were brought to the scaffold, which had been erected on Tower Hill, and which was all covered with black. Derwentwater suffered first : he was observed to turn very pale as he ascended the fatal steps ; but his voice was firm, and his demeanour steady and composed. He passed some time in prayer ; and then, by leave of the Sheriff, read a paper, drawn up in his own hand, declaring that he died a Roman Catholic—that he deeply repented his plea of guilty and expressions of contrition at his trial—and that he acknowledged no one but King James the Third for his rightful sovereign. He added : ‘I intended to wrong nobody, but to serve my King and country, and that without self-interest, hoping, by the example I gave, to have induced others to their duty ; and God, who sees the secrets of my heart, knows I speak truth. I am in perfect charity with all the world—I thank God for it—even with those of the present Government, who are the most instrumental in my death.’ He then turned to the block, and viewed it closely, and finding in it a rough place, that might hurt his neck, he bid the executioner chip it off. This being done, he prepared himself for the blow by taking off his coat and waistcoat, and laying down his head ; and he told the executioner that the sign he should give to him to do his office would be repeating for the third time, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my soul !’ At these words, accordingly, the execu-

tioner raised his axe, and severed the Earl's head at one blow. Thus died James Radcliffe, third and last Earl of Derwentwater, a gallant and unfortunate, however misguided and erring young man, greatly beloved for his amiable qualities in private life, his frankness, his hospitality, his honour. His descendants are now extinct; but his brother, having married a Scotch peeress, is the ancestor of the present Earl of Newburgh. His princely domains in Cumberland are amongst the very few forfeitures of the Jacobites which have never been restored by the clemency of the House of Hanover; they were first settled upon Greenwich Hospital, but, 1832, were alienated to Mr. Marshall of Leeds."

This statement must be modified to a certain extent, for a considerable pension out of the funds of Greenwich Hospital was settled on the Radcliffes, although Charles, the younger brother of Lord Derwentwater, took part in the second Jacobite rebellion, and suffered the penalty of his treason in 1746.

The peasantry of Northumberland and Cumberland are said to cherish the memory of Lord Derwentwater still. His body was brought from London for interment in the burial-place of his ancestors at Dilston. His widow was long an object of dislike on account of the part she had taken in persuading the Earl to his rash enterprise. A ravine of Walla Crag is called the Lady's Rake, being the supposed path by which the Countess made her escape on hearing of his capture. She fled from the rage of the peasantry, not from the pursuit of the officers of justice. On the night of his execution a remarkable display of Aurora Borealis took place; it was naturally seized by the superstitious imaginations of the people, and interpreted to mean a special manifestation

of Divine wrath at the event. In the north this phenomenon is often called, even now, "Lord Derwentwater's Lights." A few years ago a lady—whom it is but charitable to believe insane—calling herself the Countess of Derwentwater, visited the district, and, amid considerable popular sympathy, took steps to oppose the Trustees of Greenwich Hospital in the exercise of their duties as possessors of these estates. It can hardly, however, be needful to explain, that under no conceivable circumstances can this unfortunate person have had any claim upon them, for the right heirs of the Radcliffes are well ascertained. The present Countess of Newburgh, a princess of an ancient Italian family, represents the direct line, springing from Charles Radcliffe, as pointed out above. And the nearest branch of the Radcliffes, in the male line, is not descended from any Earl of Derwentwater, but from an ancestor of the first Earl.

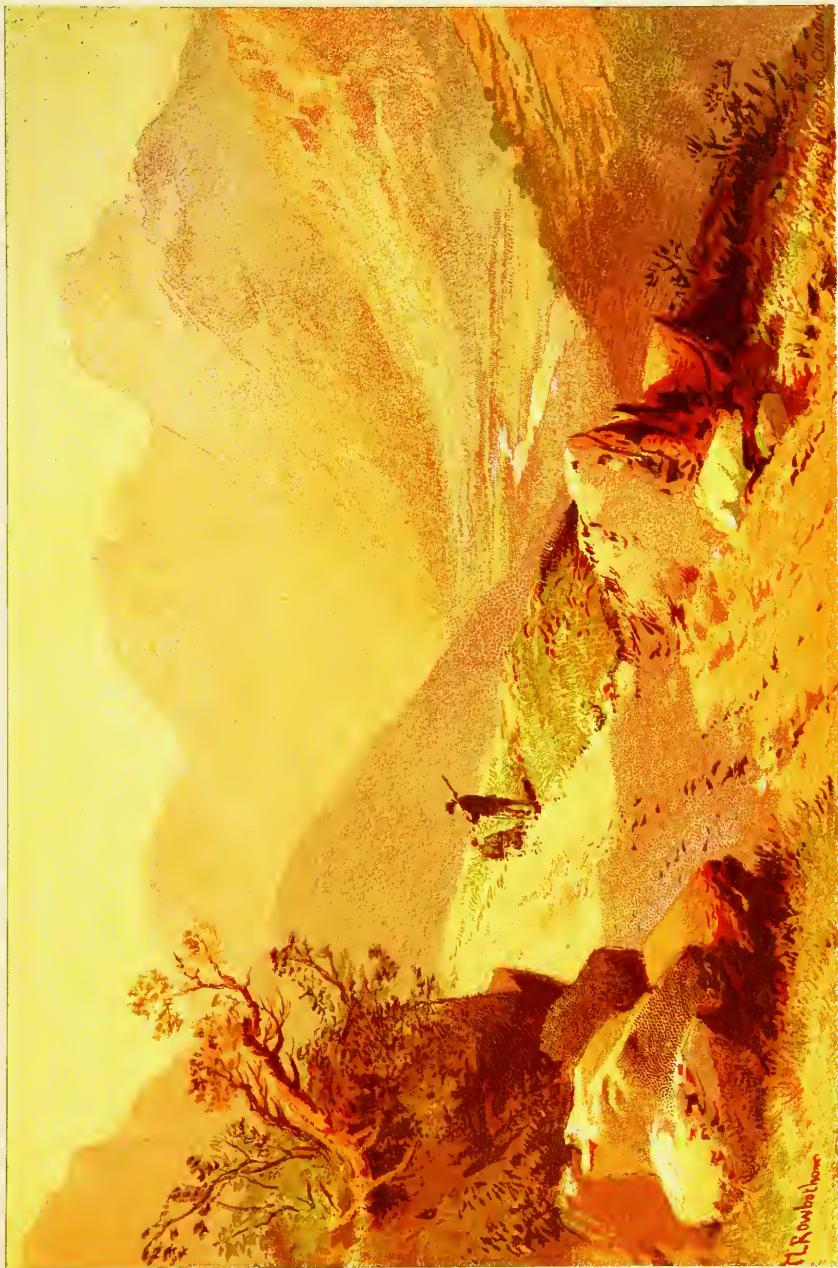




L A N G D A L E.

LT is not many years since the Lakes were unknown as a resort of tourists, their beauties unsung by poets, and their country reckoned one of the poorest and least important in England. It may be said that they were first discovered in or about the year 1750. Dalton published a poem on them in 1758. Gray visited them in 1769. Gilpin, whose works on scenery are well known, was there 1772; and since those days, Wordsworth and Southey and Coleridge, De Quincey and Arnold and Wilson, have celebrated and extolled them, one after the other, each in his own way. The lakes are beautiful on account of the scenery which surrounds them, and of all the valleys perhaps Langdale is the best. Its name denotes its superior size, and its mention by every writer is a sign how deservedly it has been admired. The Langdale Pikes, the highest of which—Stickle Pike—rises 2323 feet above the level of the sea, are best seen from this valley, and almost every turn of the mountain road gives the view a fresh beauty, discloses some additional feature, and, what is perhaps more to our present purpose, affords another allusion for the many poets who have mentioned it.

Langdale is, fortunately for the tourist, very near Ambleside,



C. Rowbotham

and may be reached and traversed almost to its head with the help of a vehicle. Passing Clappersgate, and keeping westward, Elterwater is reached where the valley divides, Lingmoor Fell separating Great from Little Langdale. The visitor keeps to the right, and the valley being now much narrower, the Pikes are seen in all their beauty. Dungeon Ghyll, though neither high nor possessed of any large body of water, is a charming waterfall, and should be visited on the way ; while, for those who like to climb mountains, Bowfell and Scawfell, Stickle Pike and Pavey Ark, are all within reach.

So much for the mere geography. Let us now see how it has been described by the poets. Wordsworth thus speaks of the Pikes :—

“ Many are the notes
That in his tuneful course the wind draws forth
From rocks, woods, caverns, heaths, and dashing shores,
And well those lofty brethren bear their part
In one wild concert,—chiefly when the storm
Rides high, when all the upper air they fill
With roaring sound that ceases not to flow
Like smoke along the level of the blast
In mighty current ; their’s, too, is the song
Of stream and headlong flood that seldom fails ;
And in the grim and breathless hour of noon
Methinks that I have heard them echo back
The thunder’s greeting. Nor have Nature’s laws
Left them ungifted of a power to yield
Music of finer tone ; a harmony,
So do I call it, though it be the hand
Of Silence ; though there be no voice ; the clouds,
The mists, the shadows, light of golden suns,
Motions of moonlight, all come hither—touch
And have an answer ;—there the Sun himself,

At the calm close of summer's longest day,
 Rests his substantial orb ; between these heights,
 And on the top of either pinnacle,
 Glitter the stars, as of their station proud."

Wordsworth's own residence at Rydal, and his never-ceasing admiration of Windermere—or, as he prefers to call it, using the older form, Winandermere—made him bestow an extra share of his attention on Langdale, to whose mountains so much of the scenery of the lake is indebted. Many if not all the principal scenes of *The Excursion* are laid in it and in the neighbouring valleys. The churchyard among the mountains, the visit to a cottage, the rustic funeral, the fine sunset from the head of the valley—all these and many similar passages occur in the same poem.

De Quincey, in one of his most charmingly discursive passages, has narrated the story of George and Sarah Green, who perished among the declivities of Langdale one winter night near the beginning of the present century. Their fate is more succinctly narrated by Wordsworth :—

" Who weeps for strangers ? Many wept
 For George and Sarah Green ;
 Wept for that pair's unhappy fate,
 Whose graves may here be seen.

" By night upon these stormy fells,
 Did wife and husband roam ;
 Six little ones at home had left,
 And could not find that home.

" For *any* dwelling-place of man,
 As vainly did they seek,
He perish'd ; and a voice was heard—
 The widow's lonely shriek.

“ Not many steps, and she was left
A body without life—
A few short steps were the chain that bound
The husband to the wife.

“ Now do these sternly-featured hills
Look gently on this grave ;
And quiet now are the depths of air,
As a sea without a wave.

“ But deeper lies the heart of peace
In quiet more profound ;
The heart of quietness is here
Within this churchyard bound.

“ And from all agony of mind
It keeps them safe, and far
From fear and grief, and from all need
Of sun or guiding star.

“ O darkness of the grave ! how deep,
After that living night—
That last and dreary living one
Of sorrow and affright !

“ O sacred marriage-bed of death !
That keeps them side by side
In bond of peace, in bond of love,
That may not be untied ! ”

De Quincey mentions several similar accidents on these hills. One of the most affecting is this, which occurs among his notes on the story of the Greens :—

“ Mr. Gough was a young man, belonging to the Society of Friends, who took an interest in the mountain scenery of the Lake

district, both as a lover of the picturesque and as a man of science. It was in this latter character, I believe, that he had ascended Helvellyn at the time when he met his melancholy end. From his familiarity with the ground—for he had been an annual visitant to the Lakes—he slighted the usual precaution of taking a guide. Mist, unfortunately—impenetrable volumes of mist—came floating over (as so often they do) from the gloomy fells that compose a common centre for Easedale, Langdale, Eskdale, Borrowdale, Wastdale, Gatesgarthdale (pronounced Keskadale), and Ennerdale. Ten or fifteen minutes afford ample time for this aerial navigation : within that short interval, sunlight, moonlight, starlight, alike disappear ; all paths are lost ; vast precipices are concealed, or filled up by treacherous draperies of vapour ; the points of the compass are irrecoverably confounded ; and one vast cloud, too often the cloud of death even to the experienced shepherd, sits like a vast pavilion upon the summits and gloomy coves of Helvellyn. Mr. Gough ought to have allowed for this not unfrequent accident, and for its bewildering effects, under which all local knowledge (even that of shepherds) becomes in an instant unavailing. What was the course and succession of his dismal adventures, after he became hidden from the world by the vapoury screen, could not be fully deciphered even by the most sagacious of mountaineers, although, in most cases, they manifest an Indian truth of eye, together with an Indian felicity of weaving all the signs that the eye can gather into a significant tale, by connecting links of judgment and natural inference, especially where the whole case ranges within certain known limits of time and of space. But in this case two accidents forbade the application of their customary

skill to the circumstances. One was the want of snow at the time, to receive the impression of his feet ; the other, the unusual length of time through which his remains lay undiscovered. He had made the ascent at the latter end of October, a season when the final garment of snow, which clothes Helvellyn from the setting in of winter to the sunny days of June, has frequently not made its appearance. He was not discovered until the following spring, when a shepherd, traversing the coves of Helvellyn or of Fairfield in quest of a stray sheep, was struck by the unusual sound (and its echo from the neighbouring rocks) of a short quick bark, or cry of distress, as if from a dog or young fox. Mr. Gough had not been missed ; for those who saw or knew of his ascent from the Wyburn side of the mountain, took it for granted that he had fulfilled his intention of descending in the opposite direction into the valley of Patterdale, or into the Duke of Norfolk's deer-park on Ullswater, or possibly into Matterdale ; and that he had finally quitted the country by way of Penrith. Having no reason, therefore, to expect a domestic animal in a region so far from human habitations, the shepherd was the more surprised at the sound, and its continued iteration. He followed its guiding, and came to a deep hollow, near the awful curtain of rock called *Striding-Edge*. There, at the foot of a tremendous precipice, lay the body of the unfortunate tourist ; and, watching by his side, a meagre shadow, literally reduced to a skin and to bones that could be counted (for it is a matter of absolute demonstration that he never could have obtained either food or shelter through his long winter's imprisonment), sat this most faithful of servants—mounting guard upon his master's honoured body, and protecting it (as he *had* done

effectually) from all violation by the birds of prey which haunt the central solitudes of Helvellyn :—

“ How nourish’d through that length of time,
He knows, who gave that love sublime,
 And sense of loyal duty—great
 Beyond all human estimate.”

Dungeon Ghyll Force, or Waterfall, too, is the subject of one of Wordsworth’s ballads :—

“ The valley rings with mirth and joy ;
 Among the hills the echoes play
 A never, never ending song,
 To welcome in the May.
 The magpie chatters with delight ;
 The mountain raven’s youngling brood
 Have left the mother and the nest ;
 And they go rambling east and west
 In search of their own food ;
 Or through the glittering vapours dart
 In very wantonness of heart.

“ Beneath a rock, upon the grass,
 Two boys are sitting in the sun ;
 Their work, if any work they have,
 Is out of mind—or done.
 On pipes of sycamore they play
 The fragments of a Christmas hymn ;
 Or with that plant which in our dale
 We call stag-horn, or fox’s tail,
 Their rusty hats they trim :
 And thus, as happy as the day,
 Those shepherds wear the time away.

“ Along the river’s stony marge
 The sand-lark chants a joyous song ;

The thrush is busy in the wood,
And carols loud and strong.
A thousand lambs are on the rocks,
All newly born ! both earth and sky
Keep jubilee, and more than all,
Those boys with their green coronal ;
They never hear the cry,
That plaintive cry ! which up the hill
Comes from the depth of Dungeon-Ghyll.

“ Said Walter, leaping from the ground,
‘ Down to the stump of yon old yew
We’ll for our whistles run a race.’
—— Away the shepherds flew ;
They leapt—they ran—and when they came
Right opposite to Dungeon-Ghyll,
Seeing that he should lose the prize,
‘ Stop !’ to his comrade Walter cries—
James stopped with no good will :
Said Walter then, exulting—‘ Here
You’ll find a task for half-a-year.

“ ‘ Cross, if you dare, where I shall cross—
Come on, and tread where I shall tread.’
The other took him at his word,
And followed as he led.
It was a spot which you may see
If ever you to Langdale go ;
Into a chasm a mighty block
Hath fallen, and made a bridge of rock .
The gulf is deep below ;
And, in a basin black and small,
Receives a lofty waterfall.

“ With staff in hand across the cleft
The challenger pursued his march ;

And now, all eyes and feet, hath gained
The middle of the arch.
When list! he hears a piteous moan—
Again!—his heart within him dies—
His pulse is stopped, his breath is lost,
He totters, pallid as a ghost,
And, looking down, espies
A lamb, that in the pool is pent
Within that black and frightful rent.

“ The lamb had slipped into the stream,
And safe without a bruise or wound
The cataract had borne him down
Into the gulf profound.
His dam had seen him when he fell,
She saw him down the torrent borne ;
And, while with all a mother’s love
She from the lofty rocks above
Sent forth a cry forlorn,
The lamb, still swimming round and round,
Made answer to that plaintive sound.

“ When he had learnt what thing it was,
The boy recovered heart, and told
The sight which he had seen.
Both gladly now deferred their task ;
Nor was there wanting other aid—
A poet, one who loves the brooks
Far better than the sages’ books,
By chance had thither strayed ;
And there the helpless lamb he found
By those huge rocks encompassed round.

“ He drew it from the troubled pool,
And brought it forth into the light :
The shepherds met him with his charge,
An unexpected sight !
Into their arms the lamb they took,
Whose life and limbs the flood had spared ;

Then up the steep ascent they hied,
And placed him at his mother's side ;
And gently did the bard
Those idle shepherd-boys upbraid,
And bade them better mind their trade."

But Wordsworth's notices of Langdale are oftener of the plaintive kind. The whole of *The Excursion* is pervaded with a melancholy tone, and the epitaph on Owen Lloyd seems best suited to his prevailing view of nature then.

"IN THE CHAPEL-YARD OF LANGDALE, WESTMORELAND.

" By playful smiles (alas! too oft
A sad heart's sunshine), by a soft
And gentle nature, and a free
Yet modest hand of charity,
Through life was Owen Lloyd endeared
To young and old ; and how revered
Had been that pious spirit, a tide
Of humble mourners testified,
When, after pains dispensed to prove
The measure of God's chastening love,
Here, brought from far, his corse found rest,—
Fulfilment of his own request ;—
Urged less for this Yew's shade, though he
Planted with such fond hope the tree ;
Less for the love of stream and rock,
Dear as they were, than that his Flock,
When they no more their Pastor's voice
Could hear to guide them in their choice
Through good and evil, help might have,
Admonished from his silent grave,
Of righteousness, of sins forgiven,
For peace on earth and bliss in heaven."

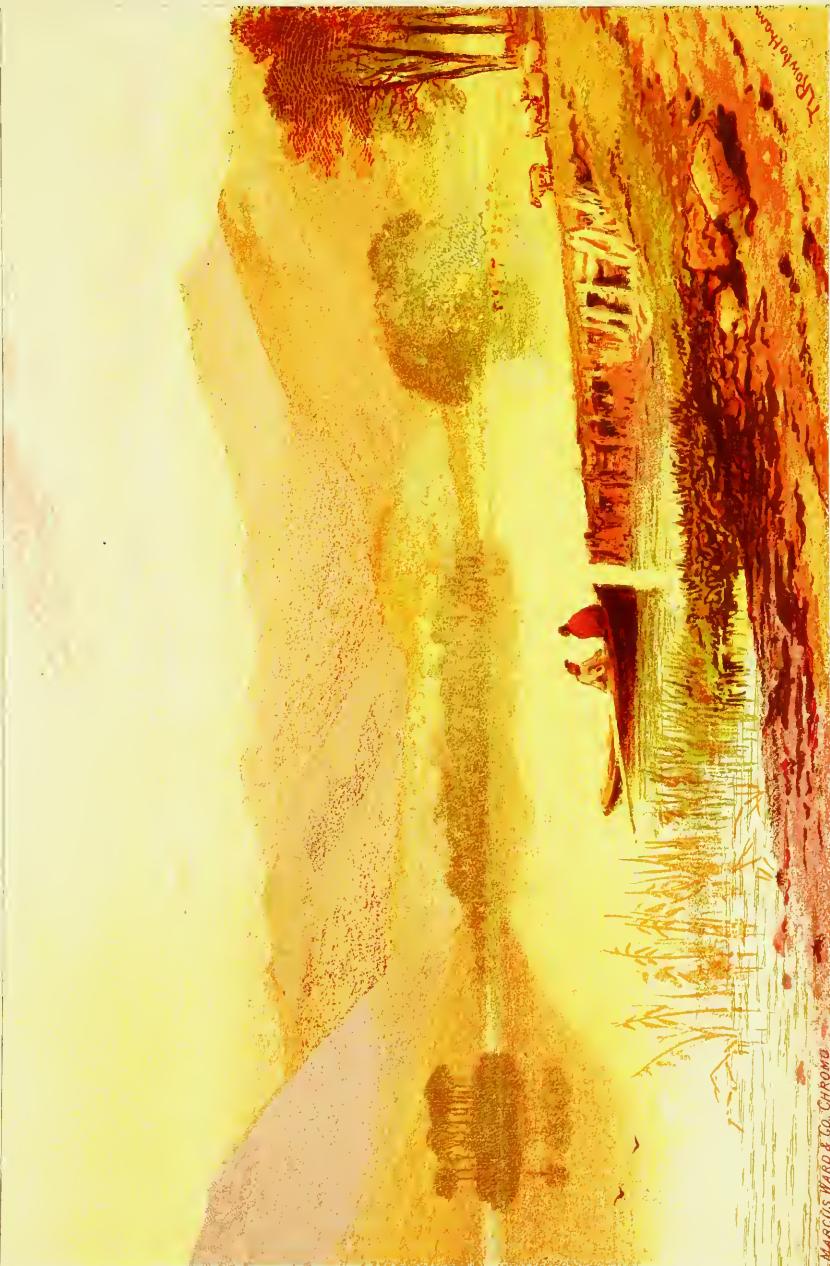


RYDAL WATER.

 HIS is one of the smallest of the “Lakes,” but there is an interest attaching to it which makes it one of the most important. It is little more than a mile round, being rather longer from east to west than from north to south. The river Rothay, entering it on the west from Grasmere, leaves it again, at the opposite extremity, for Windermere, a couple of miles to the south. It is thus in the very centre of the most picturesque scenery, and has always been admired and favoured by visitors and residents. It is thus described in the *Beauties of England and Wales*, 1814 :—

“ Rydal Water, like Grasmere, is fed by the Rothay : it is about a mile in length. A wood screens a part of its left bank ; but moist grounds, in some places, in others, low wet rocks, thinly covered with birch-trees, alders, and willows, surround the greater part of it. Different sorts of reeds, too, which grow within its shores, and here and there appear in patches all over its surface, are sure indications of its shallowness. Its islands, especially two of them, covered with wood, and of very irregular shape, have a very picturesque effect.”

And Professor Wilson has given much the same account :—



George H. Durrie

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"Here you see the mountains in magnificent composition, and craggy coppices with intervening green fields shelving down to the green margin. Rydal is a small lake, not much more than a mile round, and of a very peculiar character. It has a reedy inlet and outlet, and the angler thinks of pike when he looks upon such harbours. The heronry on the high pine-trees of the island connects the scene with the ancient park of Rydal, whose oak woods, although thinned and decayed, still preserve the majestic and venerable character of antiquity and baronial state."

With regard to its history, we may again quote the accurate authors of the *Beauties :*—

"Rydal—*i.e.*, the rye valley—was granted, about 1280, by Margaret, widow of Robert de Ros of Werk Castle, to Roger de Lancaster, from whom it passed to the Lancasters of Howgill, one of whose co-heiresses had it in marriage with Sir Thomas le Fleming, of Coningston, Knt. Rydal Old Hall stood in the Low Park, on the south side of the road to Kendal, and at present exhibits only ruinous walls, fish-ponds, and other marks of its ancient consequence. The present mansion-house, called Rydal Hall, stands on the north side of the road, is a large old-fashioned building, and commands a fine view of Winandermere. Behind it rises Rydal Head, a craggy mountain, 1030 yards above the level of the sea. The adjoining park is interspersed with abundance of old oaks; and several rocky protuberances in the lawn are covered with fine elms, and other forest trees. The cascades of the Gill, a rivulet which runs through the lawn, are, in the opinion of Gilpin and other tourists, unparalleled in their kind. Rydal Water was anciently called Rowthmere."

But the fame of Rydal is of modern growth. A little above the entrance to Rydal Hall, which still belongs to the family of Le Fleming, is Rydal Mount, which, for upwards of twenty-nine years, was the residence of Wordsworth the poet—a neat and unpretending house, with a terrace, from which there is a charming view, and a mound in front which commands the whole valley as far as Windermere. Many of the shrubs were planted by the poet, but he found the laurels there. As he says in a sonnet, written before he started on his Scottish tour of 1833 :—

“ Adieu, Rydalian laurels ! that have grown
And spread as if ye knew that days might come
When ye would shelter in a happy home,
On this fair mount, a poet of your own,—
One who ne'er ventured for a Delphic crown
To sue the God ; but, haunting your green shade
All seasons through, is humbly pleased to braid
Ground-flowers, beneath your guardianship, self-sown.
Farewell ! no minstrels now with harp new-strung
For summer wandering quit their household bowers ;
Yet not for this wants poesy a tongue
To cheer the itinerant on whom she pours
Her spirit, while he crosses lonely moors,
Or musing sits forsaken halls among.”

He came to live at Grasmere on his marriage, and removed afterwards to Rydal Mount, which remained his chief residence till his death in 1850. Many short biographies have been written of him. De Quincey gives his life in some detail in his *Recollections*, and from him and Mr. Rossetti we venture to abridge the following account. Mr. Rossetti sums up his birth and parentage thus :—

“ William Wordsworth was born at Cockermouth, in Cumberland, on the 7th of April, 1770, of a respectable family, his father being law-agent to the local magnate, soon afterwards created Lord Lonsdale. One of William’s brothers, Christopher, became also a prominent man in his own department, rising to be D.D., and Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. Both the brothers spent some years at the grammar-school of Hawkshead, Lancashire. The mother died early. William, a sturdy, big-boned, and adventurous lad, began in childhood, towards the age of ten, to feel the fascination of verse; but it would not seem that he made any very juvenile attempts at poetising on his own account, and it was not till about 1788 that he conceived the idea and the hope that he might himself be predestined a poet. Some of the verses reprinted in his complete works date, however, as early as 1786.

“ In 1787, he was entered of St. John’s College, Cambridge, and in due course of time took his degree as B.A. In all his studies there were a certain soundness and gravity which made them beneficial to him: yet he does not appear to have been imbued with any zealous admiration for the university system or its administrators, or with any ardent aspiration after knowledge. He admired but did not enter at all deeply into mathematics.

“ While still a Cambridge student, he made a continental trip on foot, with his friend the Rev. R. Jones.”

Of this tour, De Quincey observes:—

“ Wordsworth’s route, on this occasion, lay at first through Austrian Flanders, then (1788, I think) on the fret for an insurrectionary war against the capricious innovations of the imperial

coxcomb, Joseph II. He passed through the camps then forming, and thence ascended the Rhine to Switzerland ; crossed the Great St. Bernard, visited the Lake of Como, and other interesting scenes in the north of Italy, where, by the way, the tourists were benighted in a forest—having, in some way or other, been misled by the Italian clocks, and their peculiar fashion of striking round to twenty-four o'clock. On his return, Wordsworth published a quarto pamphlet of verses, describing, with very considerable effect and brilliancy, the grand scenery amongst which he had been moving. This poem, as well as another in the same quarto form, describing the English lake scenery of Westmoreland and Cumberland, addressed by way of letter ‘to a young lady’ (viz., Miss Wordsworth), are remarkable, in the first place, as the earliest effort of Wordsworth in verse, at least as his earliest publication ; but, in the second place, and still more so, from their style of composition. ‘Pure description,’ even where it cannot be said, sneeringly, ‘to hold the place of sense,’ is so little attractive as the direct exclusive object of a poem, and in reality it exacts so powerful an effort on the part of the reader to realise visually, or make into an apprehensible unity, the scattered elements and circumstances of external landscapes painted only by words, that, inevitably and reasonably, it can never hope to be a popular form of composition ; else it is highly probable that these *Descriptive Sketches* of Wordsworth, though afterwards condemned as vicious in their principles of composition by his own maturer taste, would really have gained him a high momentary notoriety with the public, had they been fairly brought under its notice ; whilst, on the other hand, his revolutionary principles of composition, and his

purer taste, ended in obtaining for him nothing but scorn and ruffian insolence."

Mr. Rossetti continues :—

" After his return from abroad, Wordsworth, although he called London for awhile his headquarters, made desultory excursions into Wales and several parts of rural England ; at one time he was settled in a cottage at Allfoxden, near Stowey, Somersetshire. A young friend named Calvert, dying, bequeathed him a legacy sufficient, with his moderate desires and habits, to relieve him from the compulsory adoption of some profession as a means of living : this discerning friend had conceived a strong idea of the poetic endowments of Wordsworth, and of the great things he might have it in him to achieve under favouring conditions. About this period, the poet's mind took a turn towards scepticism, of which his political despondencies and despair of public good may have been chiefly the cause : his dearly-loved sister, who lived with him, expostulated and roused him, and he soon banished such thoughts, and never again fell under their spell.

" Finding no assured stay in any political institutions or speculations, yet with a deep-grounded feeling of the powers of the natural man for good, and the beneficent influences of Nature, Wordsworth now began making an earnest study of the characters and minds of men in humble life. He found here much to admire and sympathise with—much to sustain his hopes ; and he longed to become the poet of man unsophisticated. In 1798 he published his *Lyrical Ballads*, comprising some contributions by Coleridge, for whom he had now formed, and afterwards retained, a very affectionate and warmly-admiring friendship. The volume was

mostly derided ; but it succeeded in the great feat of forming its own public, and within that circle was not only accepted, but enthusiastically prized. The preface to its second edition is a remarkable piece of writing, worthy of serious examination, and fertile of much in its own time and up to our days."

In 1803, Wordsworth married Miss Mary Hutchinson, his cousin. De Quincey says of her :—

" It was at Alfoxton that Miss Mary Hutchinson visited her cousins the Wordsworths ; and there, or previously, in the North of England, at Stockton-upon-Tees and Darlington, that the attachment began between Miss Mary Hutchinson and Wordsworth, which terminated in their marriage about the beginning of the present century. The marriage took place in the north ; somewhere, I believe, in Yorkshire ; and, immediately after the ceremony, Wordsworth brought his bride to Grasmere ; in which most lovely of English valleys he had previously obtained, upon a lease of seven or eight years, the cottage in which I found him living at my first visit to him in November, 1807. I have heard that there was a paragraph inserted on this occasion in the *Morning Post* or *Courier*—and I have an indistinct remembrance of having once seen it myself—which described this event of the poet's marriage in the most ludicrous terms of silly pastoral sentimentality ; the cottage being described as 'the abode of content and all the virtues,' the vale itself in the same puerile slang, and the whole event in the style of allegorical trifling about the muses, &c. The masculine and severe taste of Wordsworth made him peculiarly open to annoyance from such absurd trifling ; and, unless his sense of the ludicrous overpowered his graver feelings, he must have been

much displeased with the paragraph. But, after all, I have understood that the whole affair was an unseasonable jest of Coleridge's or Lamb's."

Elsewhere he describes Mrs. Wordsworth's personal appearance :

" Her figure was tolerably good. In complexion she was fair, and there was something peculiarly pleasing even in this accident of the skin, for it was accompanied by an animated expression of health, a blessing which, in fact, she possessed uninterruptedly. Her eyes, the reader may already know, were

' Like stars of twilight fair ;
Like twilight, too, her dark brown hair ;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful dawn.'

Yet strange it is to tell that, in these eyes of vesper gentleness, there was a considerable obliquity of vision; and much beyond that slight obliquity which is often supposed to be an attractive foible in the countenance : this *ought* to have been displeasing or repulsive ; yet, in fact, it was not. Indeed all faults, had they been ten times more and greater, would have been neutralised by that supreme expression of her features, to the unity of which every lineament in the fixed parts, and every undulation in the moving parts of her countenance, concurred—viz., a sunny benignity—a radiant graciousness—such as in this world I never saw surpassed."

De Quincey here misquotes a poem of Wordsworth's, which has always been understood to apply to his wife :—

" She was a phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight ;
A lovely apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament ;

Her eyes as stars of twilight fair ;
Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair ;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful dawn ;
A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

“ I saw her upon nearer view.
A spirit, yet a woman too !
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin-liberty ;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet ;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food ;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

“ And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine ;
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death ;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill ;
A perfect woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command ;
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of angelic light.”

His *Excursion* was published in 1814. It was only part of a larger work projected, but never given to the public :—

“ Meanwhile, in 1807, Wordsworth had issued a second volume of *Ballads*; and in 1809 had published his sole prose work, a pamphlet on the relations of England, Spain, and Portugal, urging

vigorous prosecution of the Spanish war against Napoleon. His political opinions had by this time taken the course which those of an Englishman very generally *do* take. Without entirely renouncing his speculative ideas of old time, he was, when the practical question presented itself, on the side of ‘law and order’ and of ‘the social hierarchy’—and not merely on the side of these things in the abstract and for general purposes, but in the concrete and for English purposes. In short, the Tory ingredient—that backbone of the vertebrate animal named John Bull—was predominant in him now and henceforth : social rather than political Toryism is here in question, but the two things have very delicate connections, and the sensory nerves of the social Tory continually serve as motor nerves for the political Tory. In or about the same year that the *Excursion* appeared in print, Wordsworth, hitherto the reverse of a well-to-do man, received the reward of his increasing conformity to the ‘correct’ order of things, being appointed, through the influence of the Lowther (or Lonsdale) family, distributor of stamps for the counties of Westmoreland and Cumberland—an appointment which brought him in a substantial addition of income, and left the greater part of his time at his own disposal. The poet retained this post up to 1842, when he resigned in favour of his son.”

No account of Wordsworth is worth much which does not give a due place to the sister who always resided in his house. “This,” says De Quincey, “was Miss Dorothy Wordsworth, the only sister of the poet—his ‘Dorothy ;’ who naturally owed so much to the life-long intercourse with her great brother, in his most solitary and sequestered years ; but on the other hand, to whom he has

acknowledged obligations of the profoundest nature; and, in particular, this mighty one—through which we also, the admirers and worshippers of this great poet, are become equally her debtors—that whereas the intellect of Wordsworth was, by its original tendency, too stern, too austere, too much enamoured of an ascetic harsh sublimity, she it was—the lady who paced by his side continually through sylvan and mountain tracks, in Highland glens, and in the dim recesses of German charcoal-burners—that first *couched* his eye to the sense of beauty, humanised him by the gentler charities, and engrafted, with her delicate female touch, those graces upon the ruder growth of his nature, which have since clothed the forest of his genius with a foliage corresponding in loveliness and beauty to the strength of its boughs and the massiveness of its trunks. The greatest deductions from Miss Wordsworth's attractions, and from the exceeding interest which surrounded her in right of her character, of her history, and of the relation which she fulfilled towards her brother, were the glancing quickness of her motions, and other circumstances in her deportment (such as her stooping attitude when walking), which gave an ungraceful, and even an unsexual character to her appearance when out of doors. She did not cultivate the graces which preside over the person and its carriage. But, on the other hand, she was a person of very remarkable endowments intellectually; and, in addition to the other great services which she rendered to her brother, this I may mention, as greater than all the rest, and it was one which equally operated to the benefit of every casual companion in a walk—viz., the exceeding sympathy, always ready and always profound, by which she made all that one could tell her, all

that one could describe, all that one could quote from a foreign author, reverberate, as it were *à plusieurs reprises*, to one's own feelings, by the manifest impression it made upon *hers*. The pulses of light are not more quick or more inevitable in their flow and undulation, than were the answering and echoing movements of her sympathising attention. Her knowledge of literature was irregular, and thoroughly unsystematic. She was content to be ignorant of many things; but what she knew and had really mastered lay where it could not be disturbed—in the temple of her own most fervid heart."

With regard to the remainder of Wordsworth's life there is not much to be said. His friend, Southey, lived near him at Rydal; Coleridge, too, was not far off for a time; and the three poets have often been spoken of together as forming the "Lake School," although there was little in common between their several styles. De Quincey says of Wordsworth and Southey in 1807:—

"I could read at once, in the manner of the two poets, that they were not on particularly friendly, or rather, I should say, not on confidential terms. It seemed to me as if both had silently said—we are too much men of sense to quarrel, because we do not happen particularly to like each other's writings: we are neighbours, or what passes for such in the country. Let us show each other the courtesies which are becoming to men of letters; and, for any closer connection, our distance of thirteen miles may be always sufficient to keep us from *that*. In after life, it is true—fifteen years, perhaps, from this time—many circumstances combined to bring Southey and Wordsworth into more intimate terms of friendship: agreement in politics, sorrows which had happened

to both alike in their domestic relations, and the sort of tolerance for different opinions in literature, or, indeed, in anything else which advancing years are sure to bring with them. At present, however, Southey and Wordsworth entertained a mutual esteem, but did not cordially like each other. Indeed, it would have been odd if they had. Wordsworth lived in the open air : Southey in his library, which Coleridge used to call his wife. Southey had particularly elegant habits (Wordsworth called them finical) in the use of books. Wordsworth, on the other hand, was so negligent, and so self-indulgent in the same case, that, as Southey laughingly expressed it to me some years afterwards, ‘to introduce Wordsworth into one’s library, is like letting a bear into a tulip-garden.’

Mr. Rossetti thus summarises the rest of Wordsworth’s career :

“In 1820 appeared Wordsworth’s *Sonnets on the River Duddon*; *Vaudracour and Julia*, and other poems; and *Ecclesiastical Sketches*; in 1822, his *Memorials of a Tour on the Continent* (recently undertaken in company with his wife and sister), and *Description of the Scenery of the Lakes in the North of England, with Illustrative Remarks on the Scenery of the Alps*. In April, 1845, on the decease of Southey, he was appointed poet-laureate—a post in which, as his living successor Tennyson says, he ‘uttered nothing base.’ He died at Rydal Mount on the 23rd of April, 1850, beloved and honoured, and, by a large and then increasing number of zealots, regarded as not only the greatest poet of the age, but as almost an inspired medium of communication of large divine truths to men. Upon many poets of his own and later days his influence has been apparent; but

perhaps it is a prose-writer, Ruskin, who, preaching Wordsworth with conviction and fervency, has most availed to reimpart, diffuse, and fertilise his teachings."

The poetry of Wordsworth was long in making its way into popular favour. It is even now read by a very much smaller number of admirers than that of his successor Tennyson, or even of Coleridge. But for all who take a pleasure in pastoral simplicity of the purest kind, and for those also who look for something in poetry deeper than its mere effect on the imagination and the passions, it must always occupy a high, if not the highest place. Mr. Rossetti thus describes its characteristics :—

"The essence of Wordsworth's mind in poetry is contemplative imagination ; imagination direct, extensive, and sympathetic, but so far contemplative as to interfere very gravely with its working impressiveness. The Americans have a habit of saying that so-and-so is or is not a "magnetic" man. They have often, for instance, said this latter of President Grant. Whether based or not on true notions in physiology, this is a very available laconism, and may serve us here : Wordsworth was not a magnetic man, and is consequently not a magnetic poet. Not that he is *incapable* of magnetism ; he is at times wonderfully charged with it, and produces an impression as sudden, as acute, and as profound, as almost any poet that could be named. Further than this, there are some natures, peculiarly analogous to his own, which find him very frequently or even generally magnetic ; and *any* readers who value and enter into poetry are likely to think Wordsworth, on prolonged and repeated reading, far more magnetic than they had at first supposed. Still the fact remains that, with all his imagina-

tion, all his intimate knowledge of nature, all his deep and pure feeling, all his command of poetic resource, he is not, in the large sense, a fascinating or attractive writer. His contemplativeness, combined with what was called above his ‘respectability,’ is mainly in fault. He has himself pondered too much what he wants to say, what he means to say, why he wants and means it, whether it is right to want and mean it, and how to say it. In fact, he is too conscientious and too little instinctive for a poet. Simple he often is, even to baldness—the extreme of this is one of his leading defects ; sympathetic he most assuredly is in passages or entire compositions continually recurring throughout his volumes ; spontaneous he both seems and is very often, according to his own standard of spontaneity. But even simplicity, and the sympathetic and spontaneous qualities, do not quite suffice for his purpose with the reader ; there is too much background for them (if one may use the phrase)—they come out of a nature at once too passively receptive, and too self-conscious of the process of reception and of after reproduction. He is a meditative and intensive poet—as such, admirable, perhaps unequalled ; but, if people will not accept that in full of all poetic demands, there is nothing to compel them to do so, and Wordsworth has no more to give them.”

His latest critic, Mr. Stopford Brooke (*Theology in the English Poets*), thus sums up his view of Wordsworth’s character as a poet, having separately spoken of his love for Nature, and his love for Man :—“ He looked into the world of Nature, and felt within it a living spirit, moving unseen, but making all its life. He looked again, and below the surface of the world of Man he gained a

sight of a new and living world also—a world ruled by those fixed laws—

“ Whence spiritual dignity originates,
Which do both give it being and maintain
A balance, an ennobling interchange
Of action from without and from within ;
The excellence, pure function and best power,
Both of the object seen and eye that sees.

Hence,” continues Mr. Brooke, “ when these two spiritual worlds were bound together in holy wedlock in the poet’s heart, he could speak from both of them alike, and reveal the mutual action on each other of Nature and the human mind ; and his work issuing from such origins, not only be a creation of the human mind, but also a power like one of Nature’s—speak to men, as the winds and ocean speak ; move them, as the beauty of the evening moves them ; and make them thrill, as does the thunder in the tempest, with a sense of grandeur ; soften, soothe, and bless, as the quiet of the stars, or the ripple of the water. For the poet is the living voice of Nature, as he is the expressing voice of Man.

“ Profoundly, then, impressed with Man, he did not desert his first love—Nature. He threw on her the light and emotion he had won from knowledge of the sorrows, passions, battles, and destiny of man, till she trembled not only with her own emotion, but with his. He saw in her—thus infinitely sympathetic to those who loved her, and brought the power of humanity to her—the teacher, the guide, and yet the servant of man. And in this light, the intercourse he had with her was not, as in boyhood, a wild passion, nor a solitary one—it had now a softer, gentler, more

enduring feeling, as if felt to a lover or a friend. She was no longer apart from man, but thrilled through all her veins with sympathy for man in good—no longer apart from God, but a life whose life was that of God, and as such, the external master, guide, and anchor of his being.”

We have ventured to quote this eloquent passage, because no notice of Wordsworth would be even approximately complete without some reference to the religious side of his character. The object of Mr. Brooke's lectures on this poet is to show wherein this particular characteristic consisted, and it would be easy to multiply quotations from Wordsworth's poetry to prove its accuracy. It is, however, as the poet of Nature, chiefly, that we are concerned with him, and to the traveller who visits the Lakes his genius is everywhere present. Although during the years he resided here he made many excursions into Scotland, and across the Channel to the Continent, he always returned to his home at Rydal more and more impressed with its beauty, and more enthusiastic in its praise. With Rydal Mount, therefore, his name is more intimately connected than with any other place. It was in every sense his home, and there he died. His house is shown to visitors, and attracts the same attention, for his sake, which is bestowed upon Abbotsford for that of Scott, or upon Stratford for that of a greater poet than either.

Rydal is thus inseparably connected with the name of Wordsworth, and the allusions to it and descriptions of it in his poetry are innumerable. Thus in his *Poems of the Imagination*, No. 11 is headed—“In the Woods of Rydal”:

“ Wild redbreast ! hadst thou at Jemima’s lip
Pecked, as at mine, thus boldly, love might say,
A half-blown rose had tempted thee to sip
Its glistening dews ; but hallowed is the clay
Which the Muse warms ; and I, whose head is grey,
Am not unworthy of thy fellowship :
Nor could I let one thought—one motion—slip
That might thy sylvan confidence betray.
For are we not all His without whose care
Vouchsafed no sparrow falleth to the ground ;
Who gives His angels wings to speed through air,
And rolls the planets through the blue profound ?
Then peck or perch, fond flutterer ! nor forbear
To trust a poet in still musings bound.”

And one of the *Evening Voluntaries* is written “ By the side of Rydal Mere ” :—

“ The linnet’s warble, sinking towards a close,
Hints to the thrush ’tis time for their repose ;
The shrill-voiced thrush is heedless, and again
The monitor revives his own sweet strain ;
But both will soon be mastered, and the copse
Be left as silent as the mountain tops,
Ere some commanding star dismiss to rest
The throng of rooks, that now, from twig or nest
(After a steady flight on homebound wings,
And a last game of mazy hoverings
Around their ancient grove), with cawing noise
Disturb the liquid music’s equipoise.

“ O nightingale ! who ever heard thy song
Might here be moved, till fancy grows so strong
That listening sense is pardonably cheated,
Where wood or stream by thee was never greeted.

Surely, from fairest spots of favoured lands,
 Were not some gifts withheld by jealous hands,
 This hour of deepening darkness here would be
 As a fresh morning for new harmony ;
 And lays as prompt would hail the dawn of night :
 A *dawn* she has both beautiful and bright,
 When the East kindles with the full moon's light ;
 Not like the rising sun's impatient glow
 Dazzling the mountains, but an overflow
 Of solemn splendour, in mutation slow.

“Wanderer by spring with gradual progress led,
 For sway profoundly felt as widely spread ;
 To king, to peasant, to rough sailor, dear,
 And to the soldier's trumpet-wearied ear ;
 How welcome wouldest thou be to this green vale
 Fairer than Tempe ! Yet, sweet nightingale !
 From the warm breeze that bears thee on, alight
 At will, and stay thy migratory flight ;
 Build, at thy choice, or sing, by pool or fount,
 Who shall complain, or call thee to account ?
 The wisest, happiest, of our kind are they
 That ever walk content with Nature's way,
 God's goodness—measuring bounty as it may ;
 For whom the gravest thought of what they miss,
 Chastening the fulness of a present bliss,
 Is with that wholesome office satisfied,
 While unrepining sadness is allied
 In thankful bosoms to a modest pride.”

But in the next piece he speaks more distinctly of the lake :—

“Soft as a cloud is yon blue ridge—the Mere
 Seems firm as solid crystal, breathless, clear,
 And motionless ; and, to the gazer's eye,
 Deeper than ocean, in the immensity
 Of its vague mountains and unreal sky !

But, from the process in that still retreat,
Turn to minuter changes at our feet ;
Observe how dewy twilight has withdrawn
The crowd of daisies from the shaven lawn,
And has restored to view its tender green,
That, while the sun rode high, was lost beneath their dazzling sheen.
An emblem this of what the sober hour
Can do for minds disposed to feel its power !
Thus oft, when we in vain have wished away
The petty pleasures of the garish day,
Meek eve shuts up the whole usurping host
(Unbashful dwarfs each glittering at his post),
And leaves the disencumbered spirit free
To re-assume a staid simplicity.

“ ‘Tis well—but what are helps of time and place,
When wisdom stands in need of Nature’s grace ;
Why do good thoughts, invoked or not, descend,
Like angels from their bowers, our virtues to befriend ;
If yet to-morrow, unbelied, may say,
‘ I come to open out, for fresh display,
The elastic vanities of yesterday ? ’ ”

In the *Miscellaneous Poems* there are several passages which relate to Rydal, the best known and sweetest being perhaps in the lines to Lady Fleming, “ On Seeing the Foundation Preparing for the Erection of Rydal Chapel.” This is the concluding portion :—

“ Softly as morning vapours glide
Down Rydal-cove from Fairfield’s side,
Should move the tenor of *his* song
Who means to charity no wrong ;
Whose offering gladly would accord
With this day’s work, in thought and word.

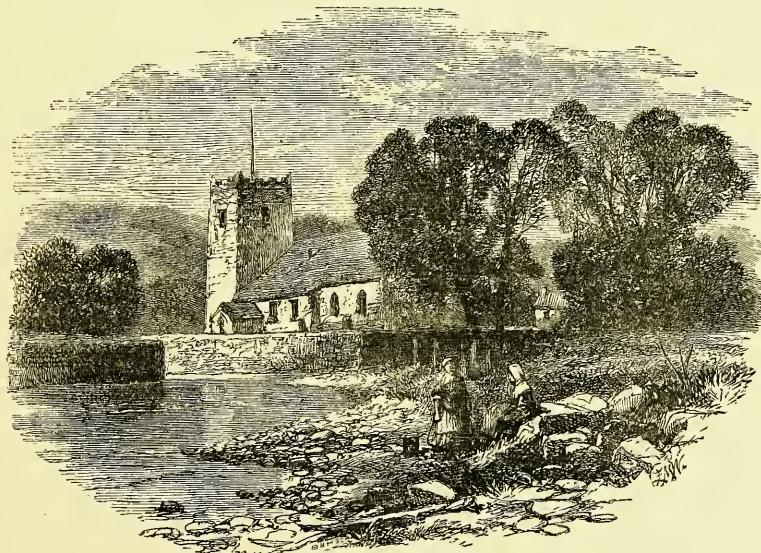
Heaven prosper it ! may peace, and love,
 And hope, and consolation, fall,
 Through its meek influence, from above,
 And penetrate the hearts of all ;
 All who, around the hallowed fane,
 Shall sojourn in this fair domain ;
 Grateful to thee, while service pure,
 And ancient ordinance, shall endure,
 For opportunity bestowed
 To kneel together, and adore their God ! ”

The following lines are among the “Inscriptions” :—

“ WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL UPON A STONE, THE LARGEST OF A HEAP LYING
 NEAR A DESERTED QUARRY, UPON ONE OF THE ISLANDS AT RYDAL.

“ Stranger ! this hillock of mis-shapen stones
 Is not a ruin spared or made by time,
 Nor, as perchance thou rashly deem’st, the cairn
 Of some old British chief ; ‘tis nothing more
 Than the rude embryo of a little dome
 Or pleasure-house, once destined to be built
 Among the birch-trees of this rocky isle.
 But, as it chanced, Sir William having learned
 That from the shore a full-grown man might wade,
 And make himself a freeman of this spot
 At any hour he chose, the prudent knight
 Desisted, and the quarry and the mound
 Are monuments of his unfinished task.
 The block on which these lines are traced, perhaps,
 Was once selected as the corner-stone
 Of that intended pile, which would have been
 Some quaint odd plaything of elaborate skill ;
 So that, I guess, the linnet and the thrush,
 And other little builders who dwell here,
 Had wondered at the work. But blame him not,
 For old Sir William was a gentle knight,
 Bred in this vale, to which he appertained
 With all his ancestry. Then peace to him,

And for the outrage which he had devised
Entire forgiveness ! But if thou art one
On fire with thy impatience to become
An inmate of these mountains,—if, disturbed
By beautiful conceptions, thou hast hewn
Out of the quiet rock the elements
Of thy trim mansion destined soon to blaze
In snow-white splendour,—think again ; and, taught
By old Sir William and his quarry, leave
Thy fragments to the bramble and the rose,
There let the vernal slow-worm sun himself,
And let the redbreast hop from stone to stone.



THE CHURCH AT GRASMERE.



EAGLE Crag.

THE road from Derwentwater to Borrowdale abounds in views such as the one which is here depicted. Castle Crag and the Boulder-stone, and, a little further on, the Eagle Crag, all form separate objects of interest besides what is offered by the ever-changing views of mountains—near or distant —unfolding one after the other as we ascend to the head of the pass which leads down towards Rydal and Windermere. Before we reach Stake Pass, the brooks and rivers flow northward in the direction of Derwentwater. From that point we find them all tending south toward Windermere. The Eagle Crag, therefore, and the tract surrounding it, may safely be termed the very heart of the Lake Country. It has also the unenviable character of being the most rainy place in the British Isles—nay, the amount of the rainfall is said to exceed at Seathwaite that of any other place in Europe, with a single exception. The rainfall on Sprinkling Fell is greater. But the two places are only a few miles apart. It will be seen, therefore, that the tourist who has fine weather in these regions must consider himself singularly fortunate; and the tourist who has wet weather must make up his mind that he fares no worse than a large proportion of his fellows.



Il Rebolium

Marco Venerdì Torino

In the *Strange Adventures of a Phaeton*, Mr. Black has cleverly taken advantage of the humidity of the climate of the Lake Country in several passages. Thus :—“ Yes, we were certainly in Westmoreland. She had scarcely uttered the words when a rapid pattering was heard among the trees, and presently a brisk shower was raining down upon us. Would she return to the phaeton for a shawl ? No. She knew the ways of Westmoreland showers on a day such as this ; indeed, she had predicted that some of the heavy clouds being blown over from the other side of Windermere would visit us in passing. In a few minutes the shower lightened, the wind that shook the heavy drops from the trees seemed to bring dryness with it, and presently a warm glow of sunshine sprang down upon the road, and the air grew sweet with resinous and fragrant smells. ‘ It was merely to lay the dust,’ said Bell, as though she had ordered the shower.”

This is a specimen, but the travellers’ route did not lie through this dale, and they had splendid weather on Windermere. To tourists who take the same route, Mr. Black’s second volume will prove an excellent companion to much of the scenery ; and where romance is wanting to enhance its beauty, the loves of Bell and the Lieutenant may add an occasional charm.

One of the earliest writers who mentions the Eagles and their Crag is Gray the poet. He visited the place more than a century ago, in October, 1769 ; and his journal gives us many interesting notes on the scenery and state of the country as was then. Gray could write prose as well as poetry, and for our present purpose his prose is the best. His simple descriptions have almost the power of sketches. Here is his account of the Eagle Crag :—

"October 3.—The hills here are clothed all up their steep sides with oak, ash, birch, holly, &c.: some of it has been cut forty years ago, some within these eight years; yet all is sprung again, green, flourishing and tall for its age, in a place where no soil appears but the staring rock, and where a man could scarce stand upright.

"Met a civil young farmer overseeing his reapers (for it is oat harvest here), who conducted us to a neat white house in the village of Grange, which is built on a rising ground in the midst of a valley. Round it the mountains form an awful amphitheatre, and through it obliquely runs the Derwent, clear as glass, and showing under its bridge every trout that passes. Beside the village rises a round eminence of rock, covered entirely with old trees; and over that more proudly towers Castle Crag, invested also with wood on its sides, and bearing on its naked top some traces of a fort said to be Roman. By the side of this hill, which almost blocks up the way, the valley turns to the left, and contracts its dimensions, till there is hardly any road but the rocky bed of the river. The wood of the mountains increases, and their summits grow loftier to the eye, and of more fantastic forms: among them appear Eagle's Cliff, Dove's Nest, Whitedalepike, &c., celebrated names in the annals of Keswick. The dale opens about four miles higher till you come to Seathwaite (where lies the way, mounting the hills to the right, that leads to the Wadd mines); all farther access is here barred to prying mortals, only there is a little path winding over the Fells, and for some weeks in the year passable to the Dale's-men; but the mountains know well that these innocent people will not reveal the mysteries of their ancient kingdom—the

reign of Chaos and Old Night : only I learned that this dreadful road, dividing again, leads one branch to Ravenglas and the other to Hawkshead.

" For me, I went no farther than the farmer's at Grange. His mother and he brought us butter that Sisera would have jumped at, though not in a lordly dish ; bowls of milk, their oaten cakes and ale ; and we had carried a cold tongue thither with us. Our farmer was himself the man that last year plundered the eagle's eyrie. All the Dale are up in arms on such an occasion ; for they lose abundance of lambs yearly, not to mention hares, partridges, grouse, &c. He was let down from the cliff in ropes to the shelf of rock on which the nest was built, the people above shouting and hallooing to fright the old birds, which flew screaming round, but did not dare to attack him. He brought off the eaglet (for there is rarely more than one) and an addle egg. The nest was roundish, and more than a yard over, made of twigs twisted together. Seldom a year passes but they take the brood or eggs, and sometimes they shoot one, sometimes the other parent ; but the survivor has always found a mate (probably in Ireland), and they breed near the old place. By his description, I learn that this species is the *Erne* (the *Vultur Albicilla* of Linnæus in his last edition, but in yours, *Falco Albicilla*). So consult him and Pennant about it."

These eagles, of which Gray speaks, are not now to be seen. They have long disappeared from Westmoreland. Buzzards and kites may sometimes be seen in their place. Wordsworth alludes to the original tenants of the Crag in one of his sonnets on the River Duddon :—

“ A dark plume fetch me from yon blasted yew,
Perched on whose top the Danish raven croaks ;
Aloft, the imperial bird of Rome invokes
Departed ages, shedding where he flew
Loose fragments of wild wailing, that bestrew
The clouds and thrill the chambers of the rocks ;
And into silence hush the timorous flocks,
That, calmly couching while the nightly dew
Moistened each fleece, beneath the twinkling stars
Slept amid that lone camp on Hardknot’s height,
Whose guardians bent the knee to Jove and Mars :
Or, near that mystic round of Druid frame
Tardily sinking by its proper weight
Deep into patient Earth; from whose smooth breast it came !”

In a note on this sonnet he says :—

“ The eagle requires a large domain for its support ; but several pairs, not many years ago, were constantly resident in this country, building their nests in the steeps of Borrowdale, Wastdale, Ennerdale, and on the eastern side of Helvellyn. Often have I heard anglers speak of the grandeur of their appearance, as they hovered over Red Tarn, in one of the coves of this mountain. The bird frequently returns, but is always destroyed. Not long since, one visited Rydal Lake, and remained some hours near its banks ; the consternation which it occasioned among the different species of fowl, particularly the herons, was expressed by loud screams. The horse also is naturally afraid of the eagle. There were several Roman stations among these mountains ; the most considerable seems to have been in a meadow at the head of Windermere, established, undoubtedly, as a check over the passes of Kirkstone, Dunmail-raise, and of Hardknot and Wrynose. On the margin of

Rydal Lake, a coin of Trajan was discovered very lately. The Roman fort here alluded to, called by the country people 'Hard-knot Castle,' is most impressively situated half-way down the hill on the right of the road that descends from Hardknot into Eskdale. It has escaped the notice of most antiquarians, and is but slightly mentioned by Lysons. The Druidical Circle is about half-a-mile to the left of the road ascending Stone-side from the vale of Duddon ; the country people call it 'Sunken Church.'"

Wordsworth recommends that the Eagle Crag, and the valley in which it forms so prominent and so beautiful a feature, should be approached neither from the north nor from the south. He says :—

" After all, the traveller would be most gratified who should approach this beautiful stream, neither at its source, as is done in the sonnets, nor from its termination ; but from Coniston over Walna Scar ; first descending into a little circular valley, a collateral compartment of the long winding vale through which flows the Duddon. This recess, towards the close of September, when the after-grass of the meadows is still of a fresh green, with the leaves of many of the trees faded, but perhaps none fallen, is truly enchanting. At a point elevated enough to show the various objects in the valley, and not so high as to diminish their importance, the stranger will instinctively halt. On the foreground, a little below the most favourite station, a rude foot-bridge is thrown over the bed of the noisy brook foaming by the wayside. Russet and craggy hills, of bold and varied outline, surround the level valley, which is besprinkled with grey rocks plumed with birch trees. A few homesteads are interspersed, in some places peeping

out from among the rocks like hermitages, whose site has been chosen for the benefit of sunshine as well as shelter ; in other instances, the dwelling-house, barn, and byre, compose together a cruciform structure, which, with its embowering trees, and the ivy clothing part of the walls and roof like a fleece, call to mind the remains of an ancient abbey. Time, in most cases, and Nature everywhere, have given a sanctity to the humble works of man that are scattered over this peaceful retirement. Hence a harmony of tone and colour, a consummation and perfection of beauty, which would have been marred had aim or purpose interfered with the course of convenience, utility, or necessity. This uninitiated region stands in no need of the veil of twilight to soften or disguise its features. As it glistens in the morning sunshine, it would fill the spectator's heart with gladsomeness. Looking from our chosen station, he would feel an impatience to rove among its pathways, to be greeted by the milkmaid, to wander from house to house, exchanging 'good-morrows' as he passed the open doors ; but at evening, when the sun is set, and a pearly light gleams from the western quarter of the sky, with an answering light from the smooth surface of the meadows ; when the trees are dusky, but each kind still distinguishable ; when the cool air has condensed the blue smoke rising from the cottage chimneys ; when the dark mossy stones seem to sleep in the bed of the foaming brook ; *then*, he would be unwilling to move forward, not less from a reluctance to relinquish what he beholds, than from an apprehension of disturbing, by his approach, the quietness beneath him. Issuing from the plain of this valley, the brook descends in a rapid torrent, passing by the churchyard of Seathwaite. The traveller is thus

conducted at once into the midst of the wild and beautiful scenery which gave occasion to the sonnets from the 14th to the 20th inclusive. From the point where the Seathwaite brook joins the Duddon, is a view upwards, into the pass through which the river makes its way into the plain of Donnerdale. The perpendicular rock on the right bears the ancient British name of 'The Pen ;' the one opposite is called 'Walla-barrow Crag,' a name that occurs in other places to designate rocks of the same character. The *chaotic* aspect of the scene is well marked by the expression of a stranger, who strolled out while dinner was preparing, and at his return, being asked by his host, 'What way he had been wandering ?' replied, 'As far as it is *finished!*'"

With all the scenery about this place Wordsworth was very familiar. Between Stonethwaite and Seathwaite is Glaramara, whose name figures often in his poetry. At the sight of Seathwaite Chapel he wrote the famous sonnet commencing—

" Sacred Religion ! 'mother of form and fear,'
Dread arbitress of mutable respect ;"

and here stand the Borrowdale yews which have ever since his day been so especially sacred to his memory :—

" There is a yew-tree, pride of Lorton vale,
Which to this day stands single, in the midst
Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore,
Not loth to furnish weapons for the bands
Of Umfraville or Percy, ere they marched
To Scotland's heaths ; or those that crossed the sea,
And drew their sounding bows at Azincour,
Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poictiers.
Of vast circumference and gloom profound

This solitary tree!—a living thing
Produced too slowly ever to decay ;
Of form and aspect too magnificent
To be destroyed. But worthier still of note
Are those fraternal four of Borrowdale,
Joined in one solemn and capacious grove.
Huge trunks!—and each particular trunk a growth
Of intertwined fibres serpentine
Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved—
Nor uniformed with phantasy, and looks
That threaten the profane ; a pillared shade
Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue
By sheddings from the pining umbrage tinged
Perennially—beneath whose sable roof
Of boughs, as if for festal purpose, decked
With unrejoicing berries, ghostly shapes
May meet at noon tide—Fear and trembling Hope,
Silence and Foresight, Death the skeleton,
And Time the shadow—there to celebrate,
As in a natural temple scattered o'er
With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,
United worship ; or in mute repose
To lie, and listen to the mountain flood
Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost caves.”







WINDERMERE.

THAT has frequently been observed as a matter not wholly unaccountable, that whilst Ireland and Scotland abound in lakes, some of them of considerable size, hardly any are to be found in England, and the few that do exist are of moderate size. It is true, some of the finest Scottish lakes are in reality arms of the sea, or what in Scandinavia would be called "Fjords." But even in these England is very deficient. Southampton Water, the estuaries of the Thames, the Severn, the Humber, and the Mersey, have very little the character of "Firths," and still less that of "Lochs." Their scenery is comparatively tame; their associations comparatively prosaic. Were it not for the Lakes scattered over Westmoreland and Cumberland, England would be almost destitute of any district worth visiting solely for its scenery. Were it not for the halo with which a few great poets have adorned the waters of Rydal and Windermere and their neighbours, we should have nothing of the kind more attractive than Gray's churchyard at Stoke, or Cowper's garden at Olney. To the northern lake district, therefore, an Englishman turns with peculiar feelings of pride. Its beauty is worthy to compare with anything which Scotland and Ireland can boast, and it saves him from the

reproach of prosaic tameness, of dull utility, which otherwise might be cast at him. The Lakes are not large ; the mountains which surround them are not high ; the whole district is not the size of an average county. But it is the one spot in England which does not owe its attraction to anything but the bounteous hand of Nature, unassisted by art, architecture, archæology, history, or any adventitious aid, except that offered abundantly by the administration of Nature's priests—the poets. From Drayton down, the beauties of the Lakes have been celebrated by a succession of singers, and their praises have gradually brought others to worship at the same shrines. The painter and the geologist share with the poet the honours of the present day. But the Lake Country must be said to have been “discovered” by the poets, to have been made their own at once, and to be their's still.

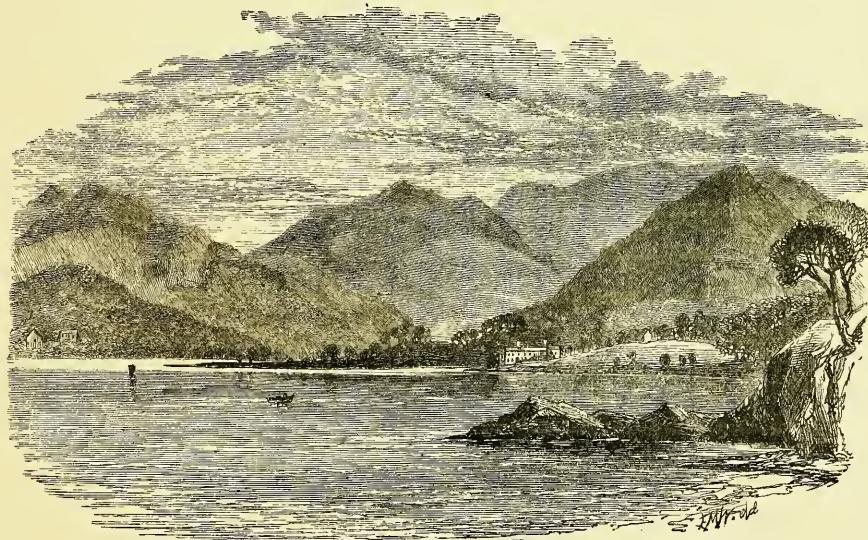
Before we proceed to see what the poets have said, we may pause a moment with the geologists. The Lakes are upwards of fifty in number. The largest is Windermere—the largest sheet of fresh water in England. This abundance is caused by the geological features of the region. It almost seems as if examples of the geological formations of all the rest of England had here been collected. The Lake Country is like a giant's museum of mineralogy. The hills and valleys are scattered about in the wildest confusion. To find any order among them is a difficult task, but one which may be accomplished. An eminent authority divides the geology of Cumberland and Westmoreland into ten periods, commencing when the whole region was below the level of an ancient sea, and tracing its gradual changes until we have it as it is. Volcanic and glacial action have told upon it in turn ; coral

and sandstone have been deposited ; and now so varied is the surface, that while the bottom of Wastwater is below the level of the sea, Helvellyn is elevated more than three thousand feet ; and that while Grey Crag Tarn is almost two thousand feet above the sea-level, the waters of Windermere are scarcely more than a hundred. This diversification gives the greatest charm to the scenery. Within a few miles the traveller may find himself, first surrounded by a park-like expanse of wood and water—cultivation, wealth, care, civilisation in their highest development everywhere apparent ; and next, on a bare moor among rocky and barren mountains, with crags and precipices, heath and fern, such as might be looked for on the stern and rugged heights of some remote region of Scotland or Wales. So far, fortunately for views, the mineral wealth of the Lake Country has not been made available. The confusion into which vast convulsions of nature have thrown the known strata, would render the working of any vein a disappointing and arduous undertaking ; and the inhabitants are the less anxious to embark in such enterprises from the ample bribe which all England offers them to refrain from disturbing the beauties of nature, or polluting the freshness of the air. So many tourists resort to them, so much money is spent on villas, hotels, vehicles, and guides, that, for the present at least, and probably as long as Englishmen, and indeed Europe also, continue to love beautiful scenery, and the works as well of nature as of great poets, no fear need be entertained that the more sordid interests of mining and collieries will interfere with the one great holiday-ground which our island affords. Though Gretna Green and its famous blacksmith are abolished, and live only in the history of

elopements, the Lakes are of all places the summer resort of newly-married couples ; and though the Lake poets, as a school, are numbered with the past, the eternal voices, the never-ceasing melodies which they evoked, are still to be heard among us, and are likely to continue their music as long as we have ears to listen, eyes to see what they described, and hearts to be touched by true poetry. The *Cataract of Lodore* will remain, even after Southey is forgotten ; and Rydal will be sacred to Wordsworth, even when the modest home which sheltered the poet has disappeared, and the new developments of our language have made his music unintelligible to the men of the coming races. The Lakes may be wanting in antiquarian lore, the rough picturesqueness of the landscape may have precluded it from sharing in the historic associations which crowd about the tamer districts of our land ; but with every year which elapses, a stronger and more abiding interest will be awakened for the corner of England which fostered the genius of so many of her greatest poets, which gave a father-land to Wordsworth, which gave an asylum to Southey, and which gave a rest to the laborious life of Arnold.

Windermere is the largest of the English Lakes, being about eleven miles long, but seldom more than a mile in breadth ; it is thus little more than twenty-two miles in total circumference, and in some places looks rather like a river than a lake ; but though there is a current from north to south, and though the Leven flows from the southern extremity into Morecambe Bay, it yet preserves a uniform level. Its surface is diversified by several islands, which greatly contribute to its beauty. Our view represents the head of the Lake, near Ambleside ; but perhaps the

lower portion from Bowness to Newby Bridge is more picturesque, being richly wooded on both banks. Belle Isle, which is nearly opposite to Bowness, is famous for having been a stronghold of the Royalists during the Civil War. It then belonged to a family of the name of Philipson, which was of great antiquity in the county, and is commemorated by several quaint monuments in the old church, St. Martin's, Windermere, generally called Bowness Church.



HEAD OF WINDERMERE.

The following amusing account of them is taken from a pamphlet on the “East Window of St. Martin’s, Windermere,” recently published for the benefit of the restoration fund :—

“On the soffit of the arch, opposite the small south door, is an inscription by a good Protestant in commemoration of the failure of the Gunpowder Plot. It may be remarked that legends about

the author, ‘Christr. Philipson Generosus,’ and his family are numerous in Windermere. The Philipsons are said to have held Belle Isle against the soldiers of Cromwell in the Civil Wars. And one terrible member of the family, best known as ‘Robin the Devil,’ rode from Windermere to Kendal in pursuit of his enemy, Colonel Briggs, and supposing he had joined the worshippers in church, galloped through the open door, along the wide aisles, and not finding his victim, escaped with the loss of his helmet, which was knocked off as he passed through the door, and still hangs in Kendal Church, known as the ‘rebel’s cap,’ a memorial of his prowess :—

“‘ He spurred his wild horse through the open church door,
 He spurred to the chancel and scanned it well o’er,
 He turned to the altar and glanced at each one
 Of the Roundheads that leapt from their knees and looked on.

“‘ But their leader, the trooper, his foe at the Mere,
 His eye could not light on. “He cannot be here,”
 So he rushed to the portal ; but not ere arose,
 From the panic-loosed swordsmen, harsh words and hard blows.

“‘ He dashed at the doorway, unstooping ; a stroke
 From the arch rent his helmet, his saddle-girths broke ;
 Half-stunned from the ground he strode up to his steed,
 And ungirthed has he mounted, and off with good speed.’*

“The well-known tradition of the ‘Two Skulls of Calgarth,’ which always returned to the window-sill in the staircase of the old hall, however carefully they had been buried, burnt, or sunk in the Lake, also belongs to this family. On a tombstone outside the

* See “Lays and Legends of the English Lake Country” for this and other lore of Lakeland.

east wall of Cartmel Fell Chapel there is a long Latin inscription in memory of ‘Johannes Philipson Generosus de Hodghill,’ who is described as excelling as much in wit and humour as did the redoubted Robin in bravery. The date of this inscription is 1732 ; and as it is recorded that a John Philipson held land at Windermere as early as the year 1355, it is clear that this family held a position of no small importance in the country for a long period. As Protestants, Royalists, and Churchmen, the old Parish Church of Windermere was probably the object of their special care, and some of the most distinguished members of the family are buried within its walls.

“The inscription under the arch of our church is as follows :—

“‘Hic est ille Dies, renovante celebrior anno,
 Quem facit et proprio signat amore Deus.
 Euge, boni ! stygiis quæ conjurata tenebris
 Nunc mala divina fabula facta manu.
 Anglia, mole suæ mox conspicienda ruinæ,
 Psallat, ut ætherea libera mansit ope.

[*Exultat Anglia.*]

Faucibus eripior Fauxis, quasi carcere mortis,
 Gloria in excelsis ! hinc mihi tuta Salus.

“‘CHRISTOPHERUS PHILIPSON, Generosus. 1629.’

“I am favoured with the following translation by the Rev. R. P. Graves, who was eighteen years pastor of the ancient parish of Windermere :—

“‘All hail to the Day ! more renowned as each year ’tis renewed,
 Which the Deity marks for His own with a signet of love.
 O ye loyal, rejoice, that the plot in hell’s darkness contrived
 Has been made by the hand of the Lord an unrealised tale :

And let England, that soon a conspicuous ruin had been,
Sing her psalm, since by heavenly aid in her freedom she stands.

[*England exults.*]

From the fauces of Fawkes I am snatched, from the dungeon of death ;
To God in the highest be the praise : for my safety's from Him.'

"This inscription is painted on the whitewash, and does not belong to the same series as those described above, which are upon the original plaster of the church. A large number of texts, as well as coloured decorations, were to be seen on the whitewash within the recollection of persons now living ; which, although comparatively ancient, were of a later date than those on the plaster. Nearly all of these had been removed for the purpose of putting up monuments and the like before the restoration of the church. There are a considerable number of these in the church, and perhaps the most interesting are the two following :—A stone tablet near the small south door, on which is inscribed, 'The Author's epitaph vpon Him selfe,' by Robert Philipson, dated 1631—not the redoubtable hero of the helmet, as he flourished at a later period ; and the monument by Flaxman to the memory of Bishop Watson, best known as the author of the 'Apology for the Bible,' who is buried with some members of his family just outside the east wall of the south aisle."

We must refer to this interesting pamphlet for the remaining part of the account of the church, and a full description, with fac-similes, of the very curious catechism found painted on the walls during the progress of the recent restorations. As at Chelsea Church, near London, and a few others, some books are still to be found chained near the pulpit—a relic of the times of the Reformation.

We may now turn to the more strictly poetical aspects of Windermere, commencing with a subject which strangely connects the purely prosaic with the poetic.

The railway which now makes Windermere so accessible was a cause of great disturbance to the mind of Wordsworth. He wrote two sonnets on the subject. They are of the finest quality, and but for the smile which their subject now evokes, would be thought worthy of a high place in every collection. They are now seldom seen beyond the covers of the complete volume in which they are published, and where they count as numbers forty-five and forty-six of the miscellaneous sonnets in *Poems of the Imagination* :—

“ON THE PROJECTED KENDAL AND WINDERMERE RAILWAY.

“ Is then no nook of English ground secure
From rash assault? Schemes of retirement sown
In youth, and 'mid the busy world kept pure
As when their earliest flowers of hope were blown,
Must perish :—how can they this blight endure?
And must he too the ruthless change bemoan
Who scorns a false utilitarian lure
'Mid his paternal fields at random thrown?
Baffle the threat, bright scene, from Orresthead
Given to the pausing traveller's rapturous glance:
Plead for thy peace, thou beautiful romance
Of nature; and, if human hearts be dead,
Speak, passing winds; ye torrents, with your strong
And constant voice, protest against the wrong.

“ Proud were ye, mountains, when, in times of old,
Your patriot sons, to stem invasive war,
Intrenched your brows: ye gloried in each scar:
Now, for your shame, a power, the thirst of gold,

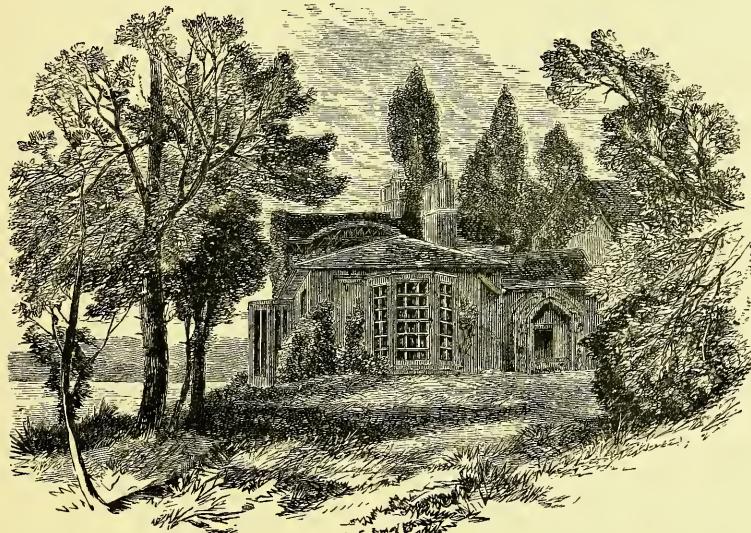
That rules o'er Britain like a baneful star,
Wills that your peace, your beauty, shall be sold,
And clear way made for her triumphal car
Through the beloved retreats your arms enfold !
Heard ye that whistle ? As her long-linked train
Swept onwards, did the vision cross your view ?
Yes, ye were startled :—and, in balance true,
Weighing the mischief with the promised gain,
Mountains, and vales, and floods, I call on you
To share the passion of a just disdain."

He afterwards changed his mind, as the forty-second piece in the poems of 1833 clearly testifies. Wordsworth loved Windermere with a passionate attachment, and constantly alludes to it in his poetry. It certainly well deserves his praise. Nor was he content to praise it : he made his friends do the same. The following description, by De Quincey, so nearly applies to the view selected by our artist, that we venture to quote it, although it is already well known :—

" The peculiar and not-to-be-forgotten feature of the scene from Elleray is the great system of mountains which unite about five miles off, at the head of the lake, to lock in and enclose this noble landscape. The several ranges which stand at various distances within six or seven miles of Ambleside, all separately various in their forms, and all eminently picturesque, appear to blend and group as parts of one connected whole ; and when their usual drapery of clouds happens to take a fortunate arrangement, and the sunlights are properly broken, and thrown from the most suitable quarter of the heavens, I cannot recollect any spectacle in England or Wales, having a local if not a national reputation for

magnificence of prospect, which so much delights with a sense of power and aërial sublimity as the terrace view from Elleray."

Our cut represents the house. It was well known as the residence of Professor Wilson, "Christopher North," and has been little altered since his time. The walks in the grounds are admirably laid out, and the public are allowed free access to them.



ELLERAY, WINDERMERE—RESIDENCE OF PROFESSOR WILSON.

In the prelude to *The Excursion*, Wordsworth is very minute in his word-painting. For absolute fidelity to Nature, the following lines in particular will be found, by those who have visited the spot, almost perfect :—

" Midway on long Winander's eastern shore,
Within the crescent of a pleasant bay,

A tavern stood ; no homely-featured house,
Primeval like its neighbouring cottages,
But, 'twas a splendid place, the door beset
With chaises, grooms, and liveries, and within
Decanters, glasses, and the blood-red wine.
In ancient times, and ere the hall was built
On the large island, had this dwelling been
More worthy of a poet's love, a hut,
Proud of its own bright fire and sycamore shade.
But—though the rhymes were gone that once inscribed
The threshold, and large golden characters,
Spread o'er the spangled sign-board, had dislodged
The old lion and usurped his place, in slight
And mockery of the rustic painter's hand—
Yet, to this hour, the spot to me is dear
With all its foolish pomp. The garden lay
Upon a slope surmounted by a plain
Of a small bowling-green ; beneath us stood
A grove, with gleams of water through the trees
And over the tree-tops ; nor did we want
Refreshment, strawberries and mellow cream.
There, while through half an afternoon we played
On the smooth platform, whether skill prevailed
Or happy blunder triumphed, bursts of glee
Made all the mountains ring. But, ere nightfall,
When in our pinnace we returned at leisure
Over the shadowy lake, and to the beach
Of some small island steered our course with one,
The minstrel of the troop, and left him there,
And rowed off gently, while he blew his flute
Alone upon the rock—oh, then, the calm
And dead still water lay upon my mind
Even with a weight of pleasure, and the sky,
Never before so beautiful, sank down
Into my heart, and held me like a dream !

Thus were my sympathies enlarged, and thus
Daily the common range of visible things
Grew dear to me : already I began
To love the sun ; a boy I loved the sun,
Not as I since have loved him, as a pledge
And surety of our earthly life, a light
Which we behold and feel we are alive ;
Nor for his bounty to so many worlds—
But for this cause, that I had seen him lay
His beauty on the morning hills, had seen
The western mountain touch his setting orb,
In many a thoughtless hour, when, from excess
Of happiness, my blood appeared to flow
For its own pleasure, and I breathed with joy.
And, from like feelings, humble though intense,
To patriotic and domestic love
Analogous, the moon to me was dear :
For I could dream away my purposes,
Standing to gaze upon her while she hung
Midway between the hills, as if she knew
No other region, but belonged to thee,
Yea, appertained by a peculiar right
To thee and thy grey huts, thou one dear vale !”

He alludes to the peculiar geographical features of the lake in the fourth book of the same poem :—

“ Bright was the summer’s noon when quickening steps
Followed each other till a dreary moor
Was crossed, a bare ridge climb, upon whose top
Standing alone, as from a rampart’s edge,
I overlooked the bed of Windermere,
Like a vast river, stretching in the sun.
With exultation, at my feet I saw
Lake, islands, promontories, gleaming bays,

A universe of Nature's fairest forms
Proudly revealed with instantaneous burst,
Magnificent, and beautiful, and gay."

But the head of the lake as we approach Ambleside is less beautiful in itself, although the distant view is one of the finest in the district. The Rydal woods, with the peaks of Fairfield, Scandal Fell, and Wansfell, form a lovely background. Wansfell is the nearest, but its fifteen hundred feet above the level of Windermere are nothing in comparison with Fairfield, which rises two thousand eight hundred feet. Fairfield is miles away, but Wansfell is close to Ambleside, and a prominent feature in nearly every view. Wordsworth points to it in the following sonnet, written in 1842 :—

"Wansfell! this household has a favoured lot,
Living with liberty on thee to gaze,
To watch while morn first crowns thee with her rays,
Or when along thy breast serenely float
Evening's angelic clouds. Yet ne'er a note
Hath sounded (shame upon the bard !) thy praise,
For all that thou, as if from heaven, hast brought
Of glory lavished on our quiet days.
Bountiful Son of Earth! when we are gone
From every object dear to mortal sight,
As soon we shall be, may these words attest
How oft, to elevate our spirits, shone
Thy visionary majesties of light,
How in thy pensive glooms our hearts found rest."

As to Ambleside itself, there is little to be said, and that little has nearly all been said by Wordsworth again. In fact, for a visit to the Lakes, Wordsworth takes the place occupied in Scotland by

Scott ; and although we may be able to point out the passages in which certain scenes are mentioned by name, or directly described, the careful reader, visiting the spot with his poems in hand, will identify at every turn some allusion, and be able to quote a line or more for every view. This is what he says about Ambleside :—

“ While beams of orient light shoot wide and high,
Deep in the vale a little rural town
Breathes forth a cloud-like creature of its own,
That mounts not toward the radiant morning sky,
But, with a less ambitious sympathy,
Hangs o'er its parent waking to the cares,
Troubles and toils that every day prepares.
So fancy, to the musing poet's eye,
Endears that lingerer. And how blest her sway
(Like influence never may my soul reject)
If the calm heaven, now to its zenith decked
With glorious forms in numberless array,
To the lone shepherd on the hills disclose
Gleams from a world in which the saints repose.”

There is little to be added to this description. Ambleside was a Roman station, according to Camden. The remains must have been much more plainly visible in his day than they are now. “ At the upper part of Winandermere,” he says, “ lies the carcase, as it were, of an ancient city, with great ruins of walls, and of buildings without the walls, still remaining scattered about. It was of an oblong form, defended by a fosse and a vallum, and the paved road leading to it plainly bespeaks it a Roman work.” Stock Ghyll Force, a waterfall, is close to the town, on its eastern side ; and on its western, on the way to Rydal, is Fox How, a place often looked at with an interest quite apart from any aroused

by the scenery in which it is situated. This is the place of which Dr. Arnold said—"If he staid more than a day at the most beautiful spot in the world, it would only bring on a longing for Fox How." It was in 1832 that he became possessed of his house here, and constantly, during the rest of his life, he came to it with pleasure, always looking at it as his home, and anticipating the pleasure of retiring to it. "'It is with a mixed feeling of solemnity and tenderness,' he said (Stanley's 'Life of Arnold,' Vol. I., 242), 'that I regard our mountain nest, whose surpassing sweetness, I think I may safely say, adds a positive happiness to every one of my waking hours passed in it.' When absent from it, it still, he said, 'dwelt in his memory as a vision of beauty from one vacation to another,' and when present at it, that 'no hasty or excited admiration of a tourist could be compared with the quiet and hourly delight of having the mountains and streams as familiar objects, connected with all the enjoyments of home, one's family, one's books, and one's friends,' 'associated with our work-day thoughts as well as our gala-day ones.' . . .

"Year by year bound him with closer ties to his new home; not only Fox How itself, with each particular tree, the growth of which he had watched, and each particular spot in the grounds, associated by him with the playful names of his nine children, but also the whole valley in which it lay, became consecrated with something of a domestic feeling. Rydal Chapel, with the congregation to which he had so often preached—the new circle of friends and acquaintance with whom he kept up so familiar an intercourse—the gorges and rocky pools which owed their nomenclature to him, all became part of his habitual thoughts. He delighted to derive his imagery

from the hills and lakes of Westmoreland, and to trace in them the likenesses of his favourite scenes in poetry and history ; even their minutest features were of a kind that were most attractive to him ; ‘the running streams,’ which were to him ‘the most beautiful objects in nature’—the wild flowers on the mountain sides, which were to him, he said, ‘as music ;’ and which, whether in their scarcity at Rydal or their profusion in Westmoreland, ‘loving them,’ as he used to say, ‘as a child loves them,’ he could not bear to see removed from their natural places by the wayside, where others might enjoy them as well as himself. The very peacefulness of all the historical and moral associations of the scenery—free alike from the remains of feudal ages in the past, and suggesting comparatively so little of suffering or of evil in the present—rendered doubly grateful to him the refreshment which he there found from the rough world in the school, or the sad feelings awakened in his mind by the thoughts of his Church and country. There he hoped, when the time should have come for his retreat from Rugby, to spend his declining years.” This was not to be. He died, as we all remember, at Rugby ; but it is affecting to notice, that while on his deathbed, and while Mrs. Arnold read to him from the *Visitation of the Sick*, “at the words ‘everlasting life,’ she stopped ; and his son said—‘I wish, dear papa, we had you at Fox How.’ He made no answer ; but the last conscious look, which remained fixed in his wife’s memory, was the look of intense tenderness and love with which he smiled on them both at that moment.” Another wish he had, was to be buried in “Grasmere churchyard ; to lie under the yews which Wordsworth planted, and to have the Rotha, with its deep and silent pools, passing by.”

Neither was this desire to be fulfilled ; for his body lies in the school chapel at Rugby. His memory still lingers about his favourite haunts at Windermere. And the frequent mention of Fox How in the “ Life,” by Dean Stanley, has largely contributed to keep this feeling alive. Many times, in his letters, he spoke of his enjoyment of the scenery. The following description of winter at Windermere occurs in a letter to Mr. Hearn, written in 1842 :—

“ I prefer writing from the delicious calm of this place, where the mountains raise their snowy tops into the clear sky by this dim twilight, with a most ghost-like solemnity ; and nothing is heard, far or near, except the sound of the stream through the valley. I have been walking to-day to Windermere, and went out on a little rude pier of stones into the lake to watch what is to me one of the most beautiful objects in nature—the life of blue water amidst a dead landscape of snow. The sky was bright, and the wind fresh, and the lake was dancing and singing, as it were ; while all along its margin lay the dead snow, covering everything but the lake—plains and valleys and mountains. I have admired the same thing more than once by the sea-side, and there the tide gives another feature in the broad band of brown shingles below high-water mark, interposed between the snow and the water.”

After the death of Dr. Arnold, his widow made Fox How her chief residence ; and having survived him more than thirty years, died there recently in a good old age.







BUTTERMERE.

TWO great mountains and half-a-dozen smaller ones rise abruptly from the edge of the small lake of Buttermere. Their heavy, rounded shadows fall gloomily into it, and seem to meet across its surface, so as almost to shut out the sky. Though it lies only three hundred feet above the level of the sea, the lofty peaks of Robinson, High Pike, and Red Pike, each more than two thousand feet high, rise on each side, and enhance the appearance of depth which naturally belongs to it. High up on the hills, another small lake—a mere tarn—overflows by a picturesque waterfall, locally known as Sourmilk Ghyll. There is not much wood in the view, and altogether, for wildness and a certain sense of remoteness which it calls up, there are few places in Cumberland or Westmoreland more impressive.

The name of Buttermere is connected in every visitor's mind with a story which adds to the natural melancholy of the place. But that this story, which we shall presently narrate, did not originate the feeling, is easily proved by the notices of the earlier travellers—Gilpin, for example, and the writers of the *Beauties of England and Wales*. The brief description given in the latter work well sums up the appearance of the scenery as it was nearly

a century ago. "Its western shores," we read, "are hemmed in by a range of rugged mountains, which rise abruptly from the margin of the water with dark and gloomy aspects, and are known to the shepherds, who are almost the only persons that pace their craggy steeps, by the names of Hay-Cock, High-Crag, High-Stile, and Red Pike." The writers turn with pleasure to the "verdant vale" which lies between Buttermere and Crummock Water, "as fine and level," we are told, "as a bowling-green." Gilpin is chiefly concerned with the southern outlet of the Lake. He says of Gatesgarth-dale that it is a very tremendous scene; that "it was not a vista, like the valley of Watenlath, nor had it any of the sudden turns of the valley of Borrowdale; but it wound slowly and solemnly in one large segment, being at least half-a-quarter of a mile from side to side, which distance is pretty uniformly observed; the rocky mountains which environed it keeping their line with great exactness, at least never breaking out into any violent projections. The area of this valley is in general concave; the sides almost perpendicular, composed of a kind of broken craggy rock, the ruins of which everywhere strew the valley, and give it still more the idea of desolation. The river also, which runs through it, is as wild as the valley itself. It has no banks but the fragments of rocks; no bed but a channel composed of rocky strata, among which the water forces its course. Its channel, as well as its bank, is composed of loose stones and fragments, which break and divide the stream into a succession of wild impetuous eddies. A stream, which is the natural source of plenty, is, perhaps, when unaccompanied with verdure, the strongest emblem of desolation; it shows the spot to be so barren, that even

the greatest source of abundance can produce nothing. The whole valley indeed joined in impressing the same ideas. Faithful Nature, making in every part of her ample range unremitting efforts to vegetate, could not here produce a single germen. As we proceeded, the grandeur of the valley increased. We had been prepared, indeed, to see the highest precipices which the country produced ; such a preface is generally productive of disappointment ; but on this occasion it did no injury : the fancy had still its scope. We found the mountains so overhung with clouds, that we could form little judgment of their height : our guide told us they were twice as high as we could see; which, however, we did not believe from the observation we were able to make, as the clouds at intervals floated past, and discovered here and there the shadowy forms of the rocky summits. A great height, however, they certainly were ; and the darkness in which they were wrapped gave us a new illustration of the grandeur of those ideas which arise from obscurity. The middle of the valley is adorned, as these valleys in some part often are, by a craggy hill, on the top of which stands the fragment of a rock that looks, in Ossian's language, like the *Stone of Power*, the rude deity of desolation to which the scene is sacred."

Gilpin's descriptions have a double value. They tell us what these places were like before they were generally visited as at the present day. They have therefore something of an archaeological character. But besides this, they are, notwithstanding their sometimes stilted language, admirable examples of word-painting, actually placing the views described before the mental eye ; and of the greater faithfulness, because Gilpin, having been himself a painter of no ordinary power, at a time when landscape was little

understood in its modern and natural sense, the descriptions are of a practical kind, and are attempts, not wholly unsuccessful, to guide the artist, as well as to amuse the stay-at-home tourist.

Housman, who wrote a *Topographical Description of Cumberland*, published seventy years ago, also excelled in a simple power of description. This is his account of Scale Force :—“ We come to a wall close under Blea-Crag, which shows nothing but a most rugged face of rock, rising in successive tiers, like so many huge walls of old castles. Here our ears are stunned with a hoarse dashing at a little distance, without any appearance of its cause. Climbing over the wall, we descend a few paces, turning to the left, towards the place from whence the sound proceeds, when the sense of sight is still more confounded than that of hearing. The rocks yawn, and open into a frightful chasm, nearly 100 yards in the mountain, the horrid aspect of which at first almost staggers our resolution of making further progress. We cautiously proceed over fragments of rocks up this awful cavity, and soon after our entrance, a waterfall of four or five yards in height meets the eye. We ascend with difficulty over the rocks on one side of this cascade, when we enter a long passage, covered with rocky fragments, and a brook tumbling at the bottom. The roofless walls on each side are perpendicular, covered with dark-coloured moss, fern, and shrubs ; and near the top large trees grow from the crevices, darkening the chasm with their impending boughs. These natural walls increase in height from about 30 to 180 feet, and are then abruptly terminated by another perpendicular wall of equal elevation running across, over which a large body of water rushes forward and falls sixty yards in one unbroken sheet, with a noise

that seems to shake the mountain, and alarms the most intrepid. The spray occasioned by the falling water rises in the form of a thick mist, and fills that part of the cavity, otherwise we might travel with caution along one side of the brook quite to the fall. This chasm is uniformly about four or five yards wide ; the bottom almost horizontal ; and between the falls, about the space of eighty yards in length, nearly in a direct line. 'The regularity of the walls forming the side and front screens of this natural curiosity is very remarkable ; nor is it easily conceived what process of nature could effect the singular excavation. After heavy rains this cascade becomes terrible, and no one can approach even to the first fall ; but in very dry seasons the quantity of water is inconsiderable.' Scale Force is indeed not only the highest waterfall in England, but, as a recent visitor has pointed out, is actually higher than Niagara itself !

But the interest of Buttermere is divided between the scenery and the story to which allusion has been made. Mary of Buttermere, the daughter of an innkeeper in the little village, excited an interest throughout England by her misfortunes, if not so much by her beauty, which most authorities have rather disparaged. Her true story has had the same influence on her native village that Scott's romances have had upon the localities in which the scenes of his fictions are laid. So often has Mary's story been written, that we have many versions of it to choose from ; and so great was the interest taken in her case, that one of the first prose writers and one of the first poets of the time have narrated it, each in the best manner of which he was capable. De Quincey seems to have spent some pains in investigating all the more obscure parts of the

drama, and, on the whole, his account must be considered the most trustworthy. It is, of course, drawn out to the greatest possible length ; but by the omission of some digressions and redundancies, we may proceed to lay the greater part of it before our readers. When we have thus made ourselves acquainted with the true version in prose, we may, if space does not fail, proceed to see what the poets have said.

“One day, in the Lake season, there drove up to the Royal Oak, the principal inn at Keswick, a handsome and well-appointed travelling carriage, containing one gentleman of somewhat dashing exterior. The stranger was a picturesque-hunter, but not of that order who fly round the ordinary tour with the velocity of lovers posting to Gretna, or of criminals running from the police ; his purpose was to domiciliate himself in this beautiful scenery, and to see it at his leisure. From Keswick, as his headquarters, he made excursions in every direction amongst the neighbouring valleys ; meeting generally a good deal of respect and attention, partly on account of his handsome equipage, and still more from his visiting cards, which designated him as ‘The Hon. Augustus Hope.’ Under this name, he gave himself out for a brother of Lord Hopetoun’s. Some persons had discernment enough to doubt of this ; for the man’s breeding and deportment, though showy, had an undertone of vulgarity about it ; and Coleridge assured me that he was grossly ungrammatical in his ordinary conversation. However, one fact, soon dispersed by the people of a little rustic post-office, laid asleep all demurs ; he not only received letters addressed to him under this assumed name—*that* might be through collusion with accomplices—but he himself continually *franked*

letters by that name. Now, this being a capital offence, being not only a forgery, but (as a forgery on the Post-Office) sure to be prosecuted, nobody presumed to question his pretensions any longer ; and, henceforward, he went to all places with the consideration attached to an earl's brother.

“ Nine miles from Keswick, by the nearest bridle-road through Newlands, but fourteen or fifteen by any route which the honourable gentleman's travelling-carriage could traverse, lies the Lake of Buttermere. Its margin, which is overhung by some of the loftiest and steepest of the Cumbrian mountains, exhibits on either side few traces of human neighbourhood ; the level area, where the hills recede enough to allow of any, is of a wild pastoral character, or almost savage ; the waters of the lake are deep and sullen ; and the barrier mountains, by excluding the sun for much of his daily course, strengthen the gloomy impressions. At the foot of this lake (that is, at the end where its waters issue) lie a few unornamented fields, through which rolls a little brook-like river, connecting it with the larger lake of Crummock ; and at the edge of this miniature domain, upon the roadside, stands a cluster of cottages, so small and few, that, in the richer tracts of England, they would scarcely be complimented with the name of hamlet.

“ Hither, however, in an evil hour for the peace of this little brotherhood of shepherds, came the cruel spoiler from Keswick. His errand was, to witness or to share in the char-fishing ; for in Derwentwater (the Lake of Keswick) no char is found, which breeds only in the deep waters, such as Windermere, Crummock,

Buttermere, and Coniston—never in the shallow ones. But, whatever had been his first object, *that* was speedily forgotten in one more deeply interesting. The daughter of the house, a fine young woman of eighteen, acted as waiter. In a situation so solitary, the stranger had unlimited facilities for enjoying her company, and recommending himself to her favour. Doubts about his pretensions never arose in so simple a place as this; they were overruled before they could well have arisen, by the opinion now general in Keswick, that he really was what he pretended to be; and thus, with little demur, except in the shape of a few natural words of parting anger from a defeated or rejected rustic admirer, the young woman gave her hand in marriage to the showy and unprincipled stranger. I know not whether the marriage was, or could have been, celebrated in the little mountain chapel of Buttermere. If it were, I persuade myself that the most hardened villain must have felt a momentary pang on violating the altar of such a chapel; so touchingly does it express, by its miniature dimensions, the almost helpless humility of that little pastoral community to whose spiritual wants it has from generation to generation administered. It is not only the very smallest chapel by many degrees in all England, but is so mere a toy in outward appearance, that, were it not for its antiquity, its wild mountain exposure, and its consecrated connexion with the final hopes and fears of the adjacent pastoral hamlet—but for these considerations, the first movement of a stranger's feelings would be towards loud laughter; for the little chapel looks not so much a mimic chapel in a drop-scene from the Opera-House, as a miniature copy from such a scene; and evidently could not receive within its walls

more than half-a-dozen of households. From this sanctuary it was—from beneath the maternal shadow, if not from the very altar, of this lonely chapel—that the heartless villain carried off the flower of the mountains. Between this place and Keswick they continued to move backwards and forwards, until at length, with the startling of a thunder-clap to the affrighted mountaineers, the bubble burst ; officers of justice appeared ; the stranger was easily intercepted from flight ; and, upon a capital charge, was borne away to Carlisle. At the ensuing assizes he was tried for forgery on the prosecution of the Post-Office ; found guilty, left for execution, and executed accordingly. On the day of his condemnation, Wordsworth and Coleridge passed through Carlisle, and endeavoured to obtain an interview with him. Wordsworth succeeded ; but, for some unknown reason, the prisoner steadily refused to see Coleridge, a caprice which could not be penetrated. It is true that he had, during his whole residence at Keswick, avoided Coleridge with a solicitude which had revived the original suspicions against him in some quarters, after they had generally gone to sleep. But for this his motive had then been sufficient : he was of a Devonshire family, and naturally feared the eye, or the inquisitive examination of one who bore a name immemorially associated with the southern part of that county.

“ The man’s real name was, I think, Hatfield. And amongst the papers were two separate correspondences, of some length, with two young women, apparently of superior condition in life (one the daughter of an English clergyman), whom this villain had deluded by marriage, and, after some cohabitation, abandoned—one of them

with a family of young children. Great was the emotion of Coleridge when he recurred to his remembrance of these letters, and bitter, almost vindictive, was the indignation with which he spoke of Hatfield. One set of letters appeared to have been written under too certain a knowledge of *his* villainy to whom they were addressed ; though still relying on some possible remains of humanity, or perhaps (the poor writer might think) on some lingering preference for herself. The other set was even more distressing ; they were written under the first conflicts of suspicions, alternately repelling with warmth the gloomy doubts which were fast arising, and then yielding to their afflicting evidence ; raving in one page under the misery of alarm, in another courting the delusions of hope, and luring back the perfidious deserter ; here resigning herself to despair, and there again labouring to show that all might yet be well. Coleridge said often, in looking back upon that frightful exposure of human guilt and misery, that the man who, when pursued by these heartrending apostrophes, and with this litany of anguish sounding in his ears, from despairing women and from famishing children, could yet find it possible to enjoy the calm pleasures of a Lake tourist, and deliberately to hunt for the picturesque, must have been a fiend of that order which fortunately does not often emerge amongst men.

“ She, meantime, under the name of ‘The Beauty of Buttermere,’ became an object of interest to all England ; melodramas were produced in the London suburban theatres upon her story ; and for many a year afterwards, shoals of tourists crowded to the secluded lake, and the little homely cataract which had been the

scene of her brief romance. It was fortunate for a person in her distressing situation that her home was not in the town. The few and simple neighbours who had witnessed her imaginary elevation, having little knowledge of worldly feelings, never for an instant connected with her disappointment any sense of the ludicrous, or spoke of it as a calamity to which her vanity might have co-operated. They treated it as unmixed injury, reflecting shame upon nobody but the wicked perpetrator. Hence, without much trial to her womanly sensibilities, she found herself able to resume her situation in the little inn ; and this she continued to hold for many years. In that place, and that capacity, I saw her repeatedly, and shall here say a word upon her personal appearance, because the Lake poets all admired her greatly. Her figure was, in my eyes, good ; but I doubt whether most of my readers would have thought it such. She was none of your evanescent, wasp-waisted beauties ; on the contrary, she was rather large every way ; tallish, and proportionably broad. Her face was fair, and her features feminine ; and, unquestionably, she was what all the world would have agreed to call ‘good-looking.’ But, except in her arms, which had something of a statuesque beauty, and in her carriage, which expressed a womanly grace, together with some degree of dignity and self-possession, I confess that I looked in vain for any *positive* qualities of any sort or degree. *Beautiful*, in any emphatic sense, she was not. Everything about her face and bust was negative ; simply without offence. Even this, however, was more than could be said at all times ; for the expression of her countenance *could* be disagreeable. This arose out of her situation, connected as it was with defective sensibility and a misdirected pride. Nothing

operates so differently upon different minds and different styles of beauty as the inquisitive gaze of strangers, whether in the spirit of respectful admiration or of insolence. Some I have seen, upon whose angelic beauty this sort of confusion settled advantageously, and like a softening veil ; others, in whom it meets with proud resentment, are sometimes disfigured by it. In Mary of Buttermere it roused mere anger and disdain ; which, meeting with the sense of her humble and dependent situation, gave birth to a most unhappy aspect of countenance. Men who had no touch of a gentleman's nature in their composition sometimes insulted her by looks and by words, supposing that they purchased the right to do this by an extra half-crown ; and she too readily attributed the same spirit of impertinent curiosity to every man whose eyes happened to settle steadily upon her face. Yet, once at least, I must have seen her under the most favourable circumstances ; for, on my first visit to Buttermere, I had the pleasure of Mr. Southey's company, who was incapable of wounding anybody's feelings, and to Mary, in particular, was well known by kind attentions, and I believe by some services. Then, at least, I saw her to advantage, and perhaps, for a figure of her build, at the best age ; for it was about nine or ten years after her misfortune, when she might be twenty-seven or twenty-eight years old. We were alone, a solitary pair of tourists : nothing arose to confuse or distress her. She waited upon us at dinner, and talked to us freely. 'This is a respectable young woman,' I said to myself ; but nothing of that enthusiasm could I feel, which beauty, such as I *have* beheld at the Lakes, would have been apt to raise under a similar misfortune. One lady, not very scrupulous in her embellishments of facts, used

to tell an anecdote of her, which I hope was exaggerated. Some friend of hers (as she affirmed), in company with a large party, visited Buttermere, within one day after that upon which Hatfield suffered ; and she protested that Mary threw upon the table, with an emphatic gesture, the Carlisle paper containing an elaborate account of his execution."

So far Mr. De Quincey. But the poet's version, in addition to its charms of composition, contains some particulars omitted by De Quincey.

In the Seventh Book of the *Prelude*, Wordsworth, speaking of the London theatres, says :—

"Here, too, were 'forms and pressures of the time,'
Rough, bold, as Grecian comedy displayed
When Art was young ; dramas of living men,
And recent things yet warm with life ; a sea-fight,
Shipwreck, or some domestic incident
Divulged by Truth and magnified by Fame :
Such as the daring brotherhood of late
Set forth, too serious theme for that light place—
I mean, O distant friend ! a story drawn
From our own ground—the Maid of Buttermere—
And how, unfaithful to a virtuous wife
Deserted and deceived, the spoiler came
And wooed the artless daughter of the hills,
And wedded her, in cruel mockery
Of love and marriage bonds. These words to thee
Must needs bring back the moment when we first,
Ere the broad world rang with the maiden's name,
Beheld her serving at the cottage inn,
Both stricken, as she entered or withdrew,
With admiration of her modest mien
And carriage, marked by unexampled grace.

We since that time not unfamiliarly
Have seen her—her discretion have observed,
Her just opinions, delicate reserve,
Her patience, and humility of mind
Unspoiled by commendation and the excess
Of public notice—an offensive light
To a meek spirit suffering inwardly.

“ From this memorial tribute to my theme
I was returning, when, with sundry forms
Commingled—shapes which met me in the way
That we must tread—thy image rose again,
Maiden of Buttermere ! She lives in peace
Upon the spot where she was born and reared,
Without contamination doth she live
In quietness, without anxiety :
Beside the mountain chapel, sleeps in earth
Her new-born infant, fearless as a lamb
That, thither driven from some unsheltered place,
Rests underneath the little rock-like pile
When storms are raging. Happy are they both—
Mother and child ! These feelings, in themselves
Trite, do yet scarcely seem so when I think
On those ingenuous moments of our youth
Ere we have learnt by use to slight the crimes
And sorrows of the world.”

Many of our readers will desire to know the sequel of Mary of Buttermere’s history. The following letter, printed in *Notes and Queries* in August, 1874, gives some interesting particulars. It was written by Mr. C. B. Hice, in answer to the question of a correspondent :—

“ Through the kindness of my friend Frederick Reed, Esq. of Hassness, Buttermere, I am enabled to give your correspondent

'Fitz Reginald' the information he desires respecting Mary of Buttermere.

"Her real name was Mary Robinson, and she died of cancer about thirty years ago. She married again, a man named Richard Harrison, and had two sons and three daughters. None of her family are now at Buttermere. One of the daughters is dead, but both the sons are still living. Little is known about one of them at Buttermere, as he 'went down into the shires when he was young,' and never visits his native county. The other son lives at Thistlebottom, Bolton Gate, in Cumberland, and is still *proprietor* of the Fish Inn at Buttermere. He rents a good farm of Lord Leconfield."

Mr. Reed adds the following particulars :—

"Mary of Buttermere was not the *beauty* she is represented to have been. She carried herself well, but got to be coarse-featured. Wordsworth and De Quincey are both very romantic on the subject of her marriage, &c. Wordsworth, speaking of the child she had by Hatfield, says :—

"Beside the mountain chapel sleeps in earth
Her new-born infant."

Now there is not, and never has been, a burial-ground at Buttermere, and it would puzzle folk to make graves in the rock on which the present chapel stands, and the late chapel stood, though Wordsworth repeats—

"Thy nameless babe that sleeps
Beside the mountain chapel undisturbed."

De Quincey says—"I know not whether the marriage was, or could have been, celebrated in the little mountain chapel of Buttermere.

If it were, I persuade myself that the most hardened villain must have felt a momentary pang on violating the altar of such a chapel, so touchingly does it express,' &c. Now, marriages were not celebrated in Buttermere chapel until about nine years ago, when I procured a licence from the Bishop. Mary of Buttermere was married in the church of Lorton, and, I believe, by the then clergyman of Buttermere, whose name was Nicholson."



